A Special Issue

Partisan Review 2

1997

$6.00
$7.80 CAN

BREAKING TRADITIONS:

FIN DE SIÈCLE 1896 AND 1996

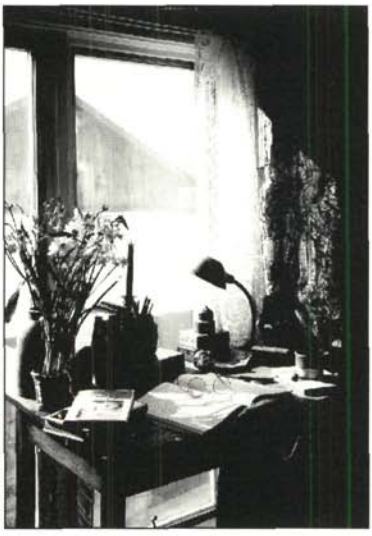
With contributions by:

Leon Cooper
Denis Donoghue
Susan Haack
James Davison Hunter
Stephen Kalberg
Edith Kurzweil
Steven Marcus
Walter Laqueur
Tibor Machan
Helen Meyers
Alfred Pfabigan
Gunther Stent
Karen Wilkin
Robert Wistrich

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BENNINGTON WRITING SEMINARS

MFA in Writing and Literature
Two-Year Low-Residency Program



A. BLAKE GARDNER

FICTION
NONFICTION
POETRY

For more information contact:
Writing Seminars, Box PR
Bennington College
Bennington, VT 05201
802-442-5401, ext. 160
Fax 802-442-6164

FACULTY

FICTION
Douglas Bauer, Elizabeth Cox, Susan Dodd, Maria Flook, Lynn Freed, Amy Hempel, Alice Mattison, Jill McCorkle, Askold Melnyczuk

NONFICTION
Sven Birkerts, Susan Cheever, Lucy Grealy, Bob Shacochis

POETRY
April Bernard, Thomas Sayers Ellis, David Lehman, Liam Rector, Jason Shinder

POET-IN-RESIDENCE
Donald Hall

RECENT ASSOCIATE FACULTY
Robert Bly
Lucie Brock-Broido
Robert Creeley
The Dark Room Collective
Bruce Duffy
Karen Finley
Judith Grossman
Barry Hannah
Jane Hirshfield
Edward Hoagland
Lewis Hyde
Jane Kenyon
Michael Lind
Bret Lott
Carole Maso
E. Ethelbert Miller
Sue Miller
Howard Norman
Robert Pinsky
Katha Pollitt
Tree Swenson
Tom Wicker

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED

EVIDENCE AND INQUIRY

Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology

SUSAN HAACK

"Students of literature stand to learn a great deal from Haack's superb book, which should be read carefully by anyone with a serious interest in any aspect of epistemology. ...Haack has a gift for clarity, concision, and rigor. ...Her work stands in sharp contrast to the bombast and carelessness characteristic of postmodernist treatments of similar topics." --***MLN (Modern Language Notes)***

"Particularly impressive is the way Haack is able efficiently to organize and insightfully to discuss extremely complex and rich material that encompasses almost all contemporary theories of knowledge. This alone would make her book a significant contribution to contemporary epistemology. However, Haack proceeds further, persuasively articulating and defending her theory, foundherentism, which no doubt will soon spark fruitful discussion under new ground rules in epistemology."
--Greek Philosophical Review

" ...a milestone in Anglo-American philosophy" ***--Anuario Filosófico*, Spain**

"...a profound and complex work" ***--Revista de Filosofía*, Spain**

"...remarkably clear and rigorous...; important ... original"
***--Archives de Philosophie*, France**

"...powerful and valuable" ***--Australasian Journal of Philosophy***

"...at once a fine introduction and a significant contribution"
--Hilary Putnam, Harvard University

"...most impressive ... comprehensive ... judicious"
--Lord Quinton, Oxford University

"...reasonable and original ... forceful and refreshing"
--Roderick M. Chisholm, Brown University

"...a uniquely thorough critique ... a satisfying synthesis"
--Sir Peter Strawson, Oxford University

"...likely to be the theory that will carry epistemology into the 21st century"
--Peirce Project Newsletter

0-631-19679-X *paperback* *$22.95*

BLACKWELL
Publishers

238 Main Street, Cambridge, MA 02142
CALL TOLL-FREE (800) 488-2665
Vermont dial (802) 878-0315 (MasterCard/Visa/American Express)

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Partisan Review

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
William Phillips

EDITOR
Edith Kurzweil

ASSOCIATE EDITOR
Steven Marcus

EDITORIAL ASSISTANTS
Estelle Leontief
Anneliese Taylor

CONTRIBUTING EDITORS
Stanislaw Baranczak
Morris Dickstein
Rosanna Warren

CORRESPONDING EDITORS
Leslie Epstein
Eugene Goodheart
Roger Shattuck

CONSULTANTS
John Ashbery
Frank Kermode
Barbara Rose

PUBLICATIONS AND ADVISORY BOARD
Joanna S. Rose, Chairman
Lillian Braude
Edwin Cohen
Cynthia G. Colin
Judith Ramsey Ehrlich
Stephen Feinberg
Richard Grimm
Marjorie Iseman
Harry Kahn
Mary Kaplan
Vera List
Robert H. Montgomery, Jr.
David B. Pearce, M.D.
Wilbur L. Ross, Jr.
Joan C. Schwartz
Roger L. Stevens
Dorothea Straus
Jon Westling
Edwin M. Zimmerman

Partisan Review, published quarterly in Winter, Spring, Summer, and Fall by Partisan Review, Inc., is at Boston University, 236 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. Phone: 617/353-4260. Fax: 617/353-7444. Subscriptions $22.00 a year, $40.00 for two years, $56.00 for three years; foreign subscriptions, including Canada, $28.00 a year, $56.00 for two years; institutions, $32.00 a year. For subscription inquiries, telephone 617/353-4106. All payments from foreign countries must be made by U.S. money order or checks drawn on U.S. account. Prepaid single issue $6.00. Add $1.50 for postage and handling. US ISSN 0031-2525.
Copyright © 1997 by Partisan Review, Inc.
Second class postage paid at Boston, Massachusetts and additional entries. Postmaster: Send address changes to 236 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. Distributed in the U.S.A. by Eastern News Distributors, Inc., 2020 Superior Street, Sandusky, OH 44870. Phone: 800/221-3148. Available in microfilm from University Microfilms International, 300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106. Send manuscripts (originals or clear photocopies only) to 236 Bay State Road, Boston, MA 02215. No manuscripts will be returned nor queries answered unless accompanied by stamped, self-addressed envelopes. No responsibility is assumed for their loss or injury.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTENTS

Contributors 181

Breaking Traditions: Fin de Siècle 1896 and 1996

Introduction

Edith Kurzweil
Igor Webb 185

Social Sciences: From Rationality to Subjectivity

James Davison Hunter 187
Stephen Kalberg 196
Alfred Pfabigan 205
Discussion 210

Psychology: From the Cases of Hysteria to the Therapeutic Society

Helen Meyers 214
Edith Kurzweil 224
Leon Cooper 232
Discussion 238

History Then and Now

Walter Laqueur 245
Robert Wistrich 251
Discussion 258

Art and Literature

Denis Donoghue 268
Karen Wilkin 275
Steven Marcus 284
Discussion 295

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Philosophy: From Metapyhsics to Language Philosophy

Susan Haack	**301**
Tibor Machan	**309**
Gunther Stent	**323**
Discussion	**331**

"Breaking Traditions: Fin de Siècle 1896 and 1996," held November 8 and 9, 1996, was made possible by support from the Austrian Cultural Institute, the Daniel and Joanna S. Rose Fund, and Joan C. Schwartz.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

CONTRIBUTORS

EDITH KURZWEIL is University Professor of Social Thought at Adelphi University and editor, most recently, of *A Partisan Century: Political Writings from Partisan Review* (Columbia University Press). . . . **IGOR WEBB** is Senior Vice President and Academic Officer of Adelphi University. . . . **ELLIOT PRUZAN** is Associate Provost for Admissions at Adelphi University. . . . **JAMES DAVISON HUNTER**, William R. Kenan Professor of Sociology at the University of Virginia, is the author of *Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture Wars* (Free Press), among other books. . . . **STEPHEN KALBERG** is Assistant Professor of Sociology at Boston University. His books include *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology* (University of Chicago Press). . . . **ALFRED PFABIGAN**, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Vienna, is the author of several books, including *Karl Kraus und der Sozialismus*. . . . **MORRIS EAGLE** is a professor at Adelphi University, Institute of Advanced Psychological Studies. . . . Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University, **HELEN MEYERS** is also editor of *Between Analyst and Patient: New Dimensions in Countertransference and Transference* (Analytic Press). . . . **LEON COOPER** shared the 1972 Nobel Prize in Physics for his studies on the theories of superconductivity. He is Professor of Science and Founder and Director of the Institute for Brain and Neural Systems at Brown University. . . . Chairman of the International Research Council at CSIS in Washington, D.C., **WALTER LAQUEUR** is the author of numerous books, including *Fascism: Past, Present, Future* (Oxford University Press). . . . **ROBERT WISTRICH** is Professor of Modern European and Jewish History at Hebrew University of Jerusalem. He is the author of *The Shaping of Israeli Identity: Myth, Memory, and Trauma* (F. Cass), among other books. . . . University Professor and Henry James Professor of English and American Letters at New York University, **DENIS DONOGHUE** is the author, most recently, of *Walter Pater: Lover of Strange Souls* (Alfred A. Knopf). . . . Critic and curator, **KAREN WILKIN** is a regular contributor to *Partisan Review*. Her latest book, *Cézanne*, was published by Abbeville Press. . . . **RICHARD GARNER** is Dean of the Honors College at Adelphi University. . . . **STEVEN MARCUS** writes frequently on psychoanalysis and on the Victorians and is the George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University. . . . Author of *Evidence and Inquiry* (Blackwell) as well as other titles, **SUSAN HAACK,** University of Florida, is Romanell-Phi Beta Kappa Professor of Philosophy for 1997. . . . **TIBOR MACHAN** is Professor of Philosophy at Auburn University and the author of *Private Rights and Public Illusions* (Transaction Publishers). . . . Emeritus Professor of Neurobiology at the University of California, Berkeley, **GUNTHER STENT** has written extensively on molecular genetics, developmental neurobiology, and the history and philosophy of science.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Miami University Press
OXFORD, OHIO

Poetry Series

What Wind Will Do

Debra Bruce

59 pp.
$19.95 cloth ISBN 1-881163-18-0
$11.95 paper ISBN 1-881163-19-9

I admire Debra Bruce's adroit use of form. Through it, paradoxically, she has acquired the freedom to confront subjects that range from cancer to infertility and she does so with grace.

—Maxine Kumin

Along with such poets as Marilyn Hacker, Jane Kenyon, and Mary Oliver, Bruce has given us another woman' s voice we have to listen to!

—Julia Alvarez

Long Distance

Aleda Shirley

77 pp.
$19.95 cloth ISBN 1-881163-16-4
$11.95 paper ISBN 1-881163-17-2

The idea that "America may always be more a passage than a place" is explored with kaleidoscopic resonance and cut-glass clarity in this moving second collection by Mississippi poet Shirley.... Throughout, both time and space are evocatively shape-shifting dimensions.... Shirley's measured lyric language and seamless craftsmanship reveal the offroad intimacies and profundities of the American landscape.

—***Publishers Weekly*** (starred review)

Now

Judith Baumel

64 pp.
$16.95 cloth ISBN 1-881163-14-8
$10.95 paper ISBN 1-881163-15-6

Judith Baumel is one of the most gifted younger poets writing in this country. —Robert Hass

Baumel somehow manages to be a mistress of metaphor, a plainspoken observer, and a meditative poet all at the same time. —Rachel Hadas

For individuals call Pathway Book Service (800) 345-6665
or Miami University Press (513) 529-5110
For trade call Ingram Book Company (800) 937-8200
or Baker & Taylor (800) 775-1100

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Books: *the original virtual reality*

...Barnes & Noble at Boston University carries an extensive selection of them, from fiction to business and professional reference, with thousands of subjects in between. Our every day discounts, worldwide shipping, and special orders of any book in print at no additional cost make it easy to get what you need.

Barnes & Noble
AT BOSTON UNIVERSITY

Kenmore Square, Boston • MBTA Green Line • (617) 267-8484 • Web Site: www.bkstore.com/bu
Hours: Monday-Friday 9:30-9 (Street Level opens at 8am), Saturday 9:30-6, Sunday 12-6

10% Off	20% Off	30% Off
Every Hardcover Every Day*	Current *New York Times* Softcover Bestsellers	Current *New York Times* Hardcover Bestsellers

**Discount does not apply to coursebooks, reference or professional reference books, or bargain books. This discount may not be combined with other discounts. Certain exceptions apply.*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

These are some of the people... Lionel Abel, Hannah Arendt, Raymond Aron, John Ashbery, W. H. Auden, James Baldwin, Donald Barthelme, Roland Barthes, Samuel Beckett, Daniel Bell, Saul Bellow, Peter Berger, Isaiah Berlin, Joseph Brodsky, Peter Brooks, Robert Brustein, Albert Camus, Cyril Connolly, Morris Dickstein, T. S. Eliot, Herbert Ferber, Michel Foucault, Helen Frankenthaler, William Gass, Allen Ginsberg, Nathan Glazer, Eugene Goodheart, Clement Greenberg, Peter Handke, Elizabeth Hardwick, John Hollander, Sidney Hook, Richard Howard, Irving Howe, Franz Kafka, Frank Kermode, Arthur Koestler, Leszek Kolakowski, Irving Kristol, Milan Kundera, Edith Kurzweil, Doris Lessing, Mario Vargas Llosa, Robert Lowell, Dwight Macdonald, Norman Mailer, Bernard Malamud, André Malraux, Steven Marcus, Mary McCarthy, Daphne Merkin, James Merrill, Leonard Michaels, Hans Morgenthau, Robert Motherwell, Vladimir Nabokov, Joyce Carol Oates, George Orwell, Amos Oz, Cynthia Ozick, Octavio Paz, William Phillips, Marge Piercy, Norman Podhoretz, Barbara Rose, Harold Rosenberg, Philip Roth, Jean-Paul Sartre, Meyer Schapiro, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., Roger Shattuck, Ignazio Silone, Isaac Bashevis Singer, Andrei Siniavski, Susan Sontag, Stephen Spender, William Stafford, William Styron, Lester Thurow, Michel Tournier, Diana Trilling, Lionel Trilling, Robert Penn Warren, Leon Wieseltier, Edmund Wilson

who have written for

Partisan Review

Why don't you become one of our readers?

PARTISAN REVIEW
236 Bay State Road
Boston, MA 02215

Enter my subscription:

- ☐ One year at $22.00 (4 issues)
- ☐ Two years at $40.00
- ☐ Three years at $56.00
- ☐ Institutional rate ($32.00 per year)

Foreign subscriptions add $6 per year.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip Code _____

☐ My check is enclosed

Please bill my credit card: ☐ MasterCard ☐ VISA

card number _____ exp. date _____

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Breaking Traditions: Fin de Siècle 1896 and 1996

Introduction

Edith Kurzweil: I want to welcome you to another *Partisan Review* conference, this one on "Breaking Traditions: 1896 and 1996." We chose these dates rather than the year 2000 not only because we wanted to be different, but because 1996 is Austria's millenium and Adelphi's centennial. We have asembled a lively and learned bunch of experts and intellectuals who will compare the thinking within their disciplines and the concerns of their culture then and now. Igor Webb, the Senior Vice President and Academic Officer of Adelphi University, will introduce our theme. But before we begin, I want to thank those who made this conference possible: the Austrian Cultural Institute, Daniel and Joanna S. Rose, Joan C. Schwartz, and, of course, Igor Webb.

Igor Webb: As you know, the prophets of the nineteenth century, like Edward Bellamy, put their faith in science and reason to achieve "true" civilization in the twentieth century. Some relied on technological advances; others on the transformation of the social order. They all felt poised on the verge of a great change, one that would finally set humanity on the road to utopia.

In many ways our century has surpassed the wildest visions of these dreamers.

We have triumphed over cold, heat, darkness, space, and are even contending with death. We can pluck the ailing heart from our chests and replace it with another made of plastic valves and pumps. We have wrested from nature authority over conception, and parturition. We envision fashioning our children more or less as we like, just as we cultivate apples that can travel the globe without a blemish or can fabricate all manner of artificial tastes, sights and sounds.

Yet we are also haunted by the plausible danger that we may, by our own acts, destroy life itself.

Indeed, our very triumphs over nature seem to threaten our survival on earth. We cannot drink the water or breathe the air without peril. Our knowledge of the secrets of matter has also enabled us to create weapons that can destroy entire populations at a single blow, and endanger all life. Our ability to see and listen to everything and to communicate instantly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with everyone means that no privacy or sanctity remains inviolate. Our technologies remain unevenly applied throughout the world and where they are employed, sometimes provoke troubling ethical questions. Our ingenuity has not lessened famine, abolished poverty, eliminated war, or eradicated racism.

Today and tomorrow, our distinguished participants will examine and discuss how we have been breaking traditions, and may have created new ones, and the extent to which our mastery of technologies has altered, and will continue to alter, our thinking and being as we enter a new millenium.

Session I: Social Sciences: From Rationality to Subjectivity

Elliot Pruzan: To provide some context for the introducers' remarks it might be useful to pursue some of the themes Dr. Webb has just articulated. Certainly, when one thinks about what social science is and what it has amounted to over the past two centuries, it might be important to bear in mind what rationality amounted to in pre-modern societies. In the works of individuals such as Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, one easily sees a view of rationality that posits a *telos* or end point. One acts rationally in order to develop oneself to achieve some kind of end. The end could be a oneness with God, or salvation, but there is a notion of completion. This completion is not something that is value-free: it is something that is good for you, something you want to achieve. The meaning of your life finds its fulfillment in your achievement of that end. As we move from the pre-modern era into the modern era, one finds a jettisoning of this conception—beginning with Descartes. Working one's way through the rationalist philosophers of the seventeenth century, one begins to encounter a conception of rationality that wishes to exclude from consideration some notion of the telos or an end. Objectivity requires that values do not intrude into an objective, empirical appreciation of what society is, of how society works, and how society could be improved. Of course, as one looks at the history of the western world from the seventeenth century to the present, one sees that in a rational encounter with the world, the role of religion, the possibilities of spirit and spirituality are becoming more and more problematic. The notion that the social sciences bring an objective account to the study of society, and of individuality, of why individuals act the way they do and what it is that they should be acting for becomes a large issue in trying to come to terms with ourselves as human beings within our cultures.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Our first speaker, James Davison Hunter, is the W.R. Kenan Professor of Sociology and Director of the Post-modernity Project at the University of Virginia. He is the author of *Before the Shooting Begins: Searching for Democracy in America's Culture War, Culture War: The Struggle to Define America,* and *Evangelicalism: The Coming Generation.* His presentation today, on "The Changing Locus of Religions," may shed some light on what the role of religion and spirituality amounts to under the paradigm of the social sciences, which have been dominant during the past one hundred years.

James Davison Hunter: A century ago progressive opinion was thoroughly convinced of the successful march of secularization. The flourishing of higher criticism in intellectual circles, the gaining dominance of the German model in American higher education, the social and political marginalization of religious orthodoxy—all seemed proof of the inevitable. And yet in the popular imagination and experience, the evidence points to just the opposite: religion remained robust. The idiom of religion continued to penetrate *public* discourse, underlay popular thinking, mark local and national observances, give meaning to nearly every public and private crisis. In this way, the public narratives about America continued to be prominently, even predominantly, framed by the symbols and normative ideals and demands of biblical faith—and not just biblical faith but more precisely Protestant faith. America was still "a land thoroughly Protestant, almost to an extreme, since Protestantism embraces not merely the large majority of the population, but is the source, at the same time, of all its social and political principles."

"The facts are manifest. The unbeliever sees them as fully as the Christian. Deny them he cannot. . . . [O]ur many-sided modern civilization, with its immense superiority over that of the heathen and ancient times, is the effect of Christianity." So announced Lewis French Stearns in the Ely Lectures at Union Theological Seminary in New York in 1890. His declaration was not exactly startling to his audience. It was, rather, a bold articulation of a sensibility of ascendancy shared by most Protestant Christians—that theirs was indeed a Christian nation and if the cause of civilization was moving forward, it was so because of its Christian character. The sense of optimism was grounded in the evidence plain to everyone. He explained,

> Today Christianity is the power which is moulding the destinies of the world. The Christian nations are in the ascendant. Just in proportion to the purity of Christianity as it exists in the various nations of Christendom is the influence they are exerting upon the world's destiny. The future of the world seems to be in the hands of the three

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> great Protestant powers—England, Germany, and the United States. The old promise is being fulfilled; the followers to the true God are inheriting the world.

Without question, the most influential expression of confidence and expectancy for America's future was Josiah Strong's magnum opus, *Our Country: Its Possible Future and Its Present Crisis*. The work was originally published in 1886 as a long essay for the Home Missionary Society. By 1916, one hundred and seventy-five thousand copies had been sold and, by then, specific chapters had been reprinted in newspapers and magazines innumerable times. It "mirror[ed] the thoughts and aspirations of th[e] dominant segment of American society towards the close of the nineteenth century . . ."—Protestantism. In Strong's view the closing years of the nineteenth century comprised a defining moment in world history—comparable to the German Reformation and second only to the birth of Christ. "The world," he declared, "is to be Christianized and civilized." Yet, "[t]here are about 1,000,000,000 of the world's inhabitants who do not enjoy a Christian civilization." What is required? In his own words, in order "that all men may be lifted up into the light of the highest Christian civilization" the "two great needs of mankind . . . are, first, a pure, spiritual Christianity, and second, civil liberty.

> Without controversy, these are the forces which, in the past, have contributed most to the elevation of the human race, and they must continue to be, in the future, the most efficient ministers to its progress. It follows, then, that the Anglo-Saxon, as the great representative of these two ideas, the depository of these two greatest blessings, sustains peculiar relations to the world's future, is divinely commissioned to be, in a peculiar sense, his brother's keeper.

Time and again, Strong emphasized that America is home to "the largest liberty, the purest Christianity, the highest civilization." For this reason, ". . . God, with infinite wisdom and skill, is training the Anglo-Saxon race for an hour sure to come in the world's future." The destiny of America and the world is clear. For Strong, the choice was between whether America would seize the moment or let it slip by. Nothing less than the eschaton was at stake.

> . . . I believe it is fully in the hands of the Christians of the United States, during the next ten or fifteen years, to hasten or retard the coming of Christ's kingdom in the world by hundreds, and perhaps

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> thousands, of years. We of this generation and nation occupy the Gibraltar of the ages which commands the world's future.

With earnest confidence he observed the high challenge and opportunity before nation: "we stretch our hand into the future with power to mold the destinies of un-born millions."

Strong was anything but alone in his triumphalism. Such optimism and expectancy was a defining feature of the spirit of the age, with similar hopes expressed broadly and shared widely, most especially by and within the dominant Protestant establishment.

But here we are, a century later.

Religion, on the face of it, continues to flourish. Some academics have really come to terms with its persistence and even go so far as to say that the contemporary America is as religious as it has ever been, maybe more. Observers point out that census and survey data seem to indicate that people are going to church, praying, being married in churches, going to Bible studies, and the like, just as much if not more than they use to. Beyond this there is the rise of fundamentalisms around the world and their politicization. Does this mean that little has changed in the past century? Many observers make this case precisely.

Such a view, however, would seem rather short-sighted. The methodological basis of this conclusion is a facile behaviorism that ignores the institutional, psychological, and cultural expressions of religious belief. When considering the matter at these levels we see that the locus of religion has changed considerably. The central dynamic in this change is the transformation of religious authority.

What do I mean by religious authority? Consider the Latin etymology. The Latin origin of the word "religion" is *religare* meaning "to bind." The Latin root of the word "authority" is *auctor* meaning originator or creator. Thus to refer to God as the author of history is to understand God as the *source* of being; as the Alpha and Omega, the fabric and *telos* of history. Likewise to refer to Scripture as the final authority on matters religious and spiritual is to see the text as the source of wisdom and knowledge. To understand the changing locus of religion, fin de siècle, one must examine the transformation of sources that have traditionally "bound" people—to truth claims, to disciplines of body and mind, to others in acts of communal sacrifice.

The first thing to be said about this topic of religious authority merely repeats a commonplace. When the Enlightenment architects designed the new order of the ages, they deliberately restricted the role of religious ideals and religious institutions in the ordering of public life. They

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

advanced this agenda not simply because religion violated their intellectual and aesthetic sensibilities, but because they were determined to secularize public affairs in order to avoid the conflict that competing religious faiths often engendered—conflict that was frequently unwieldy, entrenched, and, more often than not, bloody. The Enlightenment architects regarded secularization of the public sphere through the privatization of religion as an innovative solution to the conundrum of pluralism and the conflict that pluralism inevitably fostered.

Privatization has not been the result of structural forces alone. Religious authority has been *pushed* to the margins of public life as well. To be sure the "cultured despisers" of religion, as Schliermacher once described secular modernists, have made hostility toward the authority of traditional theism central to its liberationist agenda and the prerequisite to alternate moral claims, the premise (even if unstated) of all other antagonism toward traditional morality and the social order it reflects. The reason why the critique of traditional theistic religious texts, traditions, and reasoning has been so important in this regard is that it attacks the heart of the structure of traditional moral authority. By rejecting any appeal to the status of the speaker, to the power of an office, to tradition or to a divine presence the cultured despisers undermine the foundation of an entire constellation of social relationships and habits of life now regarded and discarded as "oppressive."

Whether the result of natural developments within contemporary Western societies or the result of anti-populist hostility, most social scientists leave the matter of religious authority there—with its marginalization from public institutions and public affairs. Yet more can be said about it. Indeed, within the private sphere, religious authority has been fragmented and subjectivized.

In making this case I take as a case study the religious legacy of Evangelical Christianity. Not only is Evangelicalism in America the legacy of Josiah Strong and L.F. Sterns mentioned earlier, but in the popular imagination, Evangelicalism has been remarkably resistant to the corrosive effects of late modernity. If the dynamics of which I speak play out in *this* faith, it is very likely that they play out within other faiths as well.

Within Evangelicalism, belief in the divine nature of scripture has long been a hallmark of the faith. It has been a defining criterion for doctrinal orthodoxy, setting the terms over the centuries within the Christian community for distinguishing truth from heresy. In principle Evangelicals still remain committed to the belief that the Bible is the divinely inspired Word of God, and therefore, infallible, even inerrant. But what do "inerrancy" and "infallibility" mean? The fact is that major differences of opinion have emerged over the past half century, differences most noticeable among Evangelical theologians. While Evangelical theologians insist

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that the Bible is the sole authority in spiritual and religious matters, as a profession, they are unable to come to any agreement on what the Bible says. Practically speaking, there is no consensus in the application of principles of inerrancy or infallibility to biblical understanding. Biblical hermeneutics is a discipline in utter disarray. One illustration of this is the way in which the origin of the world is now regarded by Evangelicals. No consensus now exists. Indeed, large numbers of Evangelicals in America have abandoned the popular, early twentieth-century view that evolution was a denial of God's creation. Instead more and more view evolution of one sort or another as an explanation of how God works *in* creation.

The same tendencies toward fragmentation can be observed in the Evangelical view of other-worldly salvation, another defining element of Christian theology. For Evangelicals traditionally, faith in Christ is the only, exclusive, and final way to heaven. All other religious faiths and world views are either misdirected or else patently false and, therefore, ideologies of destruction and delusion. There is only one absolutely true faith. Historically speaking, there is no orthodoxy without this particular creedal affirmation. But here too we observe a kind of break up of the older traditionalist consensus. Today an increasingly large number of Evangelicals believe that there may be alternative ways to heaven, especially for those who have not had the opportunity to hear of Jesus Christ. The difference between the traditional soteriology and this somewhat softened perspective is, from the vantage point of historical orthodoxy, very important. Those holding to the latter imply that some form of alternative arrangement is provided for those not exposed to the truths of Christianity. God's dealings with the unevangelized are somehow different from his dealings with those who have heard the "good news." Accordingly, views of heaven and hell are changing. Fewer and fewer Evangelicals believe in the existence of hell as an objective location and damnation as physical punishment.

The fragmentation of the traditional consensus within Evangelical theology even extends to the ways Evangelicals view themselves theologically. What does it mean to be an Evangelical? While there has always been a measure of imprecision and debate about this among all Protestants, the imprecision has expanded in recent decades. Today the term includes everyone from Jerry Falwell to Karl Barth.

Religious authority has been privatized. There its coherence as a world-view has been fragmented. But even more interesting still is that this authority has also been de-objectified and "subjectivized."

This is clearly seen in the case of the Evangelical orientation toward the Bible, the trend involves an accommodation to modern epistemologies—philosophical rationalism, even shades of positivism. Traditional literalistic renditions of the biblical literature are simply not quite so believable

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

because they no longer meet certain modern philosophical or scientific criteria of validity and consistency in scripture—which if they cannot be met at face value, then must be explained. When traditional affirmations of religious reality are, to whatever degree, undermined by modern forms of rationalism, they are simultaneously de-objectified. What was "known" with a taken-for-granted certitude becomes, at best, a "belief." Further along in this process, it becomes a religious opinion or a "feeling". Thus, when Evangelicals approach a biblical story which their tradition regards as an objective historical fact and say that they are "open" to or "comfortable" with the idea that it is just symbolic, or that it is "not really important (to them personally) that it happened historically," religious truth devolves to religious opinion. The reality has been de-objectified.

But the failures of rationalism inevitably lead to subjectivism. This is reflected in the lessening concern with the proclamation of an objective and universal truth to a concern with the subjective applicability of truth. In popular terms, Evangelicals are less concerned with "what the Bible states" to "what God might be telling us." In this situation, the realities of biblical truth applicable to all people for all time become a complex of subjective values; one device among many of therapeutic self-understanding, identity construction, and personal meaning.

The consequences of this transformation in religious authority are played out in at least two ways. The first consequence is seen in the transformation of traditional religious psychology.

In the Protestant case, inner-worldly asceticism was only possible insofar as it was based upon an ethic of renunciation with regard to the passions of this world. It was a psychological precondition for success in vocation and to the building of moral discipline. But this traditional psychology has given way to a relatively contemporary one that implicitly venerates the self. Indeed, most traditional moral prohibitions do not even capture the attention of Evangelicals much less hold the authority they once did. The meaning is plain: how is self-denial or self-mastery possible when that which is to be denied and mastered is under almost constant examination? How is the renunciation of the self possible if it is being "actualized" or "developed to its full-potential?" In sum, the legacy of austerity and ascetic self-denial is virtually obsolete in the larger Evangelical culture. The archetypal Protestant of generations past is gone. His contemporary descendant is one who, instead, "works out his salvation" not in his vocation but in the private sphere of family, personal friends, and intersubjectivity, who has either forgotten, repudiated, or "outgrown" traditional definitions of worldliness, and who has made a moral and spiritual virtue of self-understanding and self-expression.

So, what has happened to religious authority as it is experienced by the individual believer? The authority of traditional religious faith does not so

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much "disappear" as it is "worked through." The contemporary world has undermined the taken-for-grantedness of the traditions. The traditions are reinterpreted to make sense of the present, and the present is made comprehensible in traditional ways. In this way the traditions come to mean something different from what they had meant to previous generations.

In the end, belief has not dissolved but the feeling of serene certainty has. Truth is no longer something unconsciously assumed but is something to which the individual must consciously and intellectually assent. All traditional normative commitments lose their authority when the institutions that carry them no longer communicate them in ways that are inwardly motivating or subjectively compelling; all moral and religious convictions lose their force when subject to the therapeutic requirements of self-reflection. The authority of religious tradition loses its binding address.

The organizational consequences of this shift in religious authority are equally significant. Consider the matter this way. In 1966, Peter Berger wrote that the privatization and pluralization of religion forced traditional faith into a "market" situation. What had previously been authoritatively imposed, now had to be traded, merchandised, retailed. It had to be "sold" to a clientele that was no longer constrained to "buy." In it, the religious institutions become marketing agencies and the religious traditions become consumer commodities. Thus, religious groups came to organize themselves in such a way as to woo a population of consumers. Yet it was recognized as impossible to market a commodity to a population of uncoerced consumers without taking their wishes concerning the commodity into consideration. Thus, consumer preference was introduced into the religious sphere.

Curiously, what Berger intended as a social scientific metaphor three decades ago has been embraced deliberately today as a strategy in the fastest growing development within Evangelicalism—the seeker church movement. In this movement, the shopping mall becomes the paradigm of organizational effort. Marketing research is used to determine what insiders call the "felt needs" of the consumers. Rather than preaching what the traditions always held to be objectively true, ministry has now become oriented toward satisfying the psychological and emotional needs of those in the pew. Religious authority is transformed from external demands of the institution to the internal needs of the individual. The very content of what is preached is determined less by the historical traditions of the church as by the felt needs of the parishioner. In this, the organizational seat of authority is no longer the church, its traditions, its sacred texts or its leadership but the parishioner him or herself. The consumer, even of truth, has become sovereign.

In sum, a key difference between religion at the end of the nineteenth century and religion today is not so much its prevalence but in the nature

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and scope of its binding address. Over the past century, religious authority has not only been relegated to smaller and smaller areas of human experience, but even there its power to compel has been tamed and domesticated. There are, of course, a few important exceptions—religious orthodoxy has, in some cases, continued to be linked to violent protest against abortion, homosexuality, avant garde art and the like just as it continues to be linked to more mainstream (yet still quite conservative) political activism. But considering the larger institutional presence of religion fin de siècle it is increasingly the exception to the rule.

In exploring the changing constitution of religious authority I have focused upon the case of American Evangelicalism. Given all of its natural resistance to the modernizing and liberalizing tendencies in the culture one can make a prediction. If these dynamics are at play here, then they must be at work in other faiths as well. Indeed, the tendencies of fragmentation and subjectivization as well as its consequences are in evidence especially in those religious traditions that have left orthodoxy far behind—from liberal Protestantism and Reform Judaism to secular communitarianism. In different ways than in Evangelicalism, the evidence points to the same in other orthodoxies too. All belief systems have reworked their form of address (albeit, in different ways) from the transcendent to the subjective. All are experiencing the pressures of fragmentation.

It is banal simply to conclude that public culture is irretrievably secular. With the privatization, fragmentation, and subjectivization of religious particularism, we are seeing the emergence of a functional nihilism in public culture. How so?

Historically, it is clear that religion has long provided the foundation of various societal orders. Its authority has animated commitment, demanded moral discipline, and offered transcendent legitimation. This is true of the "religion" of the classical world as well in which Nature and its Laws functioned in the same way. The transformation of the religious authority in the ways described has enormous consequences for the larger social order. Not least, there can be no religious faith that can be publicly acceptable any more. Even if there were such a faith, as, say, in civil religiosity, it is neither stable nor coherent. Where symbols of transcendence are invoked in public, they have no compelling substantive content. Likewise, appeals to traditional values are made without any binding particularity. In brief, we end up with the separation of religion from the moral order in public life. Here too the moral ideals invoked are shorn of the offensive particularities of specific creeds.

All of this, of course, was anticipated by Nietzsche a century ago. Nietzsche recognized that the Victorian moralists—like "that flathead Mill" and "that moralist female" George Eliot—who sought to secularize

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

morality, were merely borrowing from the religious capital that was the source of their morality. His contempt for these "moral fanatics" as he called them was unrelenting. He saw this world view as weak and half-hearted. Having lost the fear of God, it was degenerating into a quasi-religion of comfortable enjoyment and respectability. The best that was left of it was a "gentle moralism," the modest disposition to believe that divine love would make everything for the best. Nor did Nietzsche think much better of the secular philosophies which offered themselves as substitutes—democracy, liberalism, humanitarianism, scientific and industrial progress—"Modern ideas," he sarcastically called them. They repeated the same essential values on a less heroic scale, and none seemed to offer an adequate goal for living.

Beneath their "insipid and cowardly concept of man," he argued, lingered the old "cult of Christian morality." What they did not realize was how conditional their morality was on the religion they professed to discard. As Nietzsche saw it, when one gives up the Christian faith one thereby pulls from under one's feet the right to the Christian ethic. The same must be said about Jewish faith or any other faith. The reason is that each particular faith is a system, an intellectually connected and whole view of things. If one breaks a major notion, such as the belief in God, out of it, one shatters the whole. In Christianity, for example, ethics are uttered as commands; their origin is transcendent and they are beyond all criticism, all right to criticism. Their truth resides only if God is the truth. When the English say they believe they know "intuitively" what is good and evil, it is merely the result of the authority of the Christian value judgment and an expression of the strength and depth of this authority. Here as everywhere "men have ceased to be Christian without having the courage to be anything else."

Morality without religion? Indeed not: "All purely moral demands without their religious basis," he says, "must needs end in nihilism." What is left? Intoxication. "Intoxication with music, with cruelty, with hero-worship, or with hatred . . . some sort of mysticism . . . Art for Art's sake, Truth for Truth's sake, as a narcotic against self-disgust; some kind of routine, any silly little fanaticism . . ." But none of these drugs can have any lasting effect.

Morality was not yet a problem for the English, in Nietzsche's view, because of the persistence of the Christian religion in that society. All is different today. Morality has become a problem precisely because the divorce between religion and morality is now complete. All of the religious capital that has been the source of our public moralities has all been used up. Thus, the phenomenon that Nietzsche observed among Victorian intellectuals at the end of the nineteenth century has become (or is quickly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

becoming) the institutional reality for all of us at the end of the twentieth century. The separation of morality from religion is not new, rather it is just more common; more clearly established as a fixture of public culture. Today too people prefer to see gestures to hearing reasons.

Religion persists at the end of the twentieth century but its authority has been fundamentally transformed. It persists but is hollowed out. The significance of the Evangelical case, once so robust and optimistic about the future, is that one might still imagine it to be, by virtue of its doctrinal orthodoxy, a community of resistance to the creeping nihilism of our public culture. And yet the separation of religious authority from public morality has occurred here as well. Despite its intent to reinsert religion into public life, the creedal authority it invokes has been fragmented and subjectivized. The irony is that even among those who claim to be defending "Christian civilization" there is evidence that they are contributing to exactly the opposite—the institutionalization of nihilism in our public culture.

Such are the ironies of history.

Elliot Pruzan: Thank you Professor Hunter. I was trying to take notes on your many brilliant insights. The fact of privatization of religious authority is something that bears scrutiny, and I think it is a perfect lead-in to our next speaker's presentation. His topic is "Max Weber: The Iron Cage." Stephen Kalberg is Associate Professor of Sociology at Boston University, and the author of *Max Weber's Comparative-Historical Sociology*. He is able to speak with some authority of Weber's view on the role of religion in the contemporary world, and on whether or not the kind of *de facto* privatization of religious authority Professor Hunter spoke to is inevitable and impervious to any form of transcendence.

Stephen Kalberg: I will look at the last fin de siècle and this one in terms of Max Weber's sociology. Weber is well-known in the U.S. for his depiction of the modern world as an "iron cage" (*stahlhartes Gehäuse*). Along with most of his German colleagues at the fin de siècle, he viewed the coming of modern capitalism with trepidation and foreboding. How does Weber define the iron cage and does this metaphor accurately capture his view of modernity? More generally, do Weber's distinguished sociological writings assist Americans today, at the dawn of the twenty-first century, in understanding their own society and, in particular, its "political culture?"

In his most famous book, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism*, Weber argued that the "inner-worldly" asceticism of Reform Calvinism had given birth to the notion of a "vocational calling." This methodical orientation toward work, as it spread in the American Colonies, lost its religious foundations after several generations.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Nonetheless, this ethos, or *spirit* of capitalism, now simply a "practical-ethical" constellation of values, had done its part in assisting the birth of an industrial and highly organized capitalism. We who are born into this modern economic order are no longer motivated to work methodically on the basis of a calling or even an ethos; rather, we do so simply because "this mechanism . . . bound to the technical and economic conditions of machine production" coerces us to do so in order to survive. A mighty structure founded in an instrumental rationality of technical, administrative, and market contingencies determines our lives. Capitalism now rests on mechanical foundations and irresistible force: "The Puritan *wanted* to work in a calling . . . we *must* do so." Once intricately linked to labor, these values are no longer crucial to or cultivated in modern industrial work, even though work has become the very center of our lives: "The idea of duty in one's calling prowls about in our lives like the ghost of dead religious beliefs."

Moreover, modern capitalism advances together with specific organizations adapted to its functioning, which affirm technical administration. In Weber's words,

> the bureaucratic organization, with its specialization of trained skills, its division of jurisdiction, its rules and hierarchical relations of authority . . . is busy fabricating the shell of bondage (*Gehäuse jener Hörigkeit*) which men will perhaps be forced to inhabit some day, as powerless as the fellahs of ancient Egypt. This might happen if a technically superior administration were to be the ultimate and sole value in the ordering of their affairs.

In this iron cage model, the domination of bureaucracies calls forth a caste of functionaries and civil servants who monopolize power. Opportunities for the development of genuine entrepreneurs and political leaders vanish in this rigidly stratified society as austerely rational as a machine. Wherever the inescapable power of functionaries reigns, there is a loss of societal dynamism; societal stagnation results.

This iron cage society, without brotherhood and compassion, becomes increasingly dominated by the impersonal values of the functionary on the one hand—duty, punctuality, reliability, respect for hierarchy, etc.—and calculations of interests and advantage on the other hand. A retreat into the private realm is viewed as the single means of survival with a measure of dignity intact. "Home and hearth" become the refuge, the only place of warmth and compassion. In this portrait, civic virtues and public ethics are absent and most values beyond the personal ones are mere moribund legacies from earlier—mainly religious—epochs. They are now threatened

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

with extinction by the inexorable expansion of calculation, manipulation, and instumental rationality.

Many interpreters take this depiction as Weber's actual characterization of our times. He is then portrayed as a dour and haunted figure, as fatalistic and despairing, yet also as an heroic, stoical, and brooding giant who carried the bleak burdens of the twentieth century upon his broad shoulders.

It must be acknowledged that Weber's view of modernity was far from that of fin de siècle Anglo-Saxon theorists, who hailed the coming of the industrial age as "progress," a new advance of civilization, and a further stage in the triumphant evolution of mankind. He also parted ways with all "theorists of democracy" who discovered in the industrialized world a broad civic realm of open participation, public ideals and ethics, and personal liberties. Moreover, had he still been writing in the 1950s, he would have sharply disagreed with the "modernization" theorists, all of whom asserted (in one way or another) that industrialization itself calls forth democracy and that democracy's advance proceeds apace with industrialism.

Nonetheless, Weber's complex view of the twentieth century cannot be encapsulated by the iron cage metaphor. Rather than a reality or short-term scenario, the iron cage was Weber's nightmare that *might* be on our horizon. Moreover, Weber in many ways welcomed the modern world, in particular the freedoms and rights it bestowed upon individuals and the very notion of the autonomous individual. He scorned the past, as well as the naive romanticism of most of his colleagues: "After all, it is a gross deception to believe that without the achievements of the age of the Rights of Man any one of us, including the most conservative, can go on living his life." He spoke and wrote on behalf of strong and contending political parties, of the constitutional division of powers, of an "ethic of responsibility" for politicians, constitutional guarantees of civil liberties, and the extension of suffrage. He argued vehemently that democracy would be possible only where strong parliaments existed, which he saw as training grounds for political leaders of the "plebiscitory leadership democracy" he advocated. And he sought to erect mechanisms that would sustain pluralistic, competing interest groupings in order to check the power of bureaucracies, for "we . . . partisans of 'democratic' institutions . . . are swimming 'against the tide' of material constellations." Rather than the fatalism and despair so prominent among his contemporaries in Germany, particularly Nietzsche and Georg Simmel, he mixed skepticism with appreciation. In fact, the common portrayal of Weber as perceiving the twentieth century as an iron cage is derived largely from his political and social-philosophical essays rather than from his sociology. Weber's comparative-historical sociology is far more differentiated. There his posture regarding modern industrial and urban

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

societies is both more *dynamic* and more subtle than the iron cage metaphor suggests.

Weber's understanding of "societies" as only loosely held together and as constituted from an array of competing, reciprocally interacting domains of action unfolding at varying speeds—the religious, economic, legal, rulership, status groups, and family domains—persuades him that past developments were extremely important to explain the present. It also convinces him that customs, conventions, laws, relationships of domination and values deeply permeate the present in often obscure ways. He rejects all conceptualizations of societies as either "traditional" or "modern," because the past may live on for millennia within the interstices of the present and even within its central core. Even the abrupt appearance of "the new" and even the extraordinary power of charismatic leadership never fully rupture ties to the past.

Weber calls attention, for example, to the many ways in which the values of ascetic Protestantism, originating in seventeenth-century colonial America, continue to endure in weakened and secularized forms in daily life: in an unambivalent support of capitalism and self-reliant individualism, a distrust of the state, a basic orientation to the future and the "opportunities" it offers, an intolerance of perceived evil, a high rate of giving donations to charity, a nimble capacity to form civil associations, and a strong belief in the ability of individuals to shape their own destinies. Despite vast transformations, such legacies from the feudal and agrarian past endure, penetrating the homogenizing "structural constraints" of industrialism. Rather than being radically divorced from the past, Weber argues that modern societies are best conceptualized as dynamic mixtures of past and present. Moreover, his view of "modernity" in his sociological writings is never homogeneous. Instead, he advocates an examination of each particular country and an assessment of the *uniqueness* of each.

Although both Germany and the U.S., for example, were quite advanced industrial societies at the fin de siècle, there were significant differences. In Germany he pointed to the strong social welfare state, the authoritarian centralization of power, the weak parliament, the passive citizenry "governed like sheep," and the state church, as well as to hierarchical social conventions, industrialization directed "from above," and the "formal-rational" continental legal system anchored in a constitution. In the U.S. a different configuration became prominent: a decentralized and "weak state," a division of political powers and an activist citizenry, egalitarian social patterns and separation of church and state, a strong parliament and industrialization "from below," and a legal system strongly indebted to English Common Law based upon precedent.

Hence, again, the depiction of Weber as proposing a global "iron cage" does not hold. In his sociological writings he views each industrial nation

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as distinct. How, then, in these writings, was the U.S. portrayed? Now, nearly a century later, can his analysis offer insight into the internal workings of our fin de siècle American society and, in particular, into its political culture?

Weber saw an unusual dualism as specific to the American heritage. An initiative-taking, activity-oriented, and entrepreneurial "world mastery" individualism relatively uncircumscribed by traditions was juxtaposed with its seeming opposite: a prominent *civic* sphere of ideals and values pulling and guiding individuals beyond self-interest and toward the betterment of their communities. Although Weber recognized that both components of this dualism had become distinctly weakened by the twentieth century, this intertwining of incompatible forces fascinated him. And he concluded that both orientations—to self and to community—were deeply rooted in the American soil, particularly in its religious history.

American ascetic Protestantism—the Reform Calvinist, Congregationalist, Methodist, Baptist, Quaker, Presbyterian, and Mennonite churches—called forth an intense, task-oriented individualism. Believers were expected to keep an especially vigilant "watchfulness" over all creaturely impulses, and to abjure worldly pleasure to an unusual degree; however, an exclusive reliance upon the believer's own inner resources was also expected. The Sacraments or other rituals could not assist the devout, even though "right" and "wrong" became understood in rigidly moral terms. Nor could the clergy assure them of salvation. Standing alone before a wrathful, omnipotent, and vengeful Old Testament God and responsible solely to Him, the devout had to rely upon themselves to create "evidence" of their predestined status.

Yet the injunction of asceticism—to focus the individual's energies, through heroic discipline, on behalf of a taming of the creaturely impulses was only one demand made of ascetic Protestants. They also were expected to "master" wordly evil by creating on earth the Kingdom of God. Because neither tolerance of nor separation from evil could be allowed, a religious obligation of world mastery became an imperative to the devout: to *act* in accord with God's commandments and against worldly evil, even against secular authority and popular opinion if necessary. Hence, these believers never practiced an individualism inclined toward compromise, caution, and contemplation; instead, a steadfast, "world-oriented" individualism was cultivated that endowed early Americans with resoluteness and a robust optimism regarding their capacity to confront traditions. The alteration of society as a whole—the creation of the Kingdom of God—constituted its aim.

Thus, to ascetic Protestants, the improvement of the community became part and parcel of one's religious obligation and a service to God. This occurred in another manner as well. As noted, the devout were alone

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

responsible for seeking alleviation of the excruciating anxiety that accompanied uncertainty regarding the central question for believers: their personal salvation status. Yet Reform Calvinists in particular could, through their actions, convince themselves of their status among the saved. Weber especially emphasizes one mechanism for doing so: if worldly success—defined as material prosperity—was attained, the faithful could conclude that this success itself indicated the favor of an omniscient and omnipotent God. And God, of course, would offer such a "sign" only to the predestined. In this manner, unusually strong "psychological premiums" were awarded to methodical work; only through systematic labor might material prosperity be attained.

Remarkably, even though ultimately motivated by the search to clarify the *individual's* salvation status, this intensification of work had the effect of accentuating the commitment of believers *to a community*. For, although left alone by ascetic Protestant doctrine to create "evidences" of their membership among the saved, the methodical work of the devout—the means of doing so—never served the individual alone. Instead, God's glory required the faithful to labor on His behalf and to create, in His honor, the humane earthly Kingdom. Hence, labor became methodical, yet also oriented away from the egocentric individual's interests and toward far broader tasks. This Mission constituted a religious obligation. In this way, work tied believers into a community and took place for a purpose larger than utilitarian calculations aimed to accumulate material goods. A clear dualism is apparent: a world mastery individualism focused upon individual rights and the capacity of individuals to shape and re-shape their personal destinies, yet an equally strong thrust toward community improvement.

Furthermore, a delineated organization crystallized as the "social carrier" for the psychological premiums upon community participation introduced by ascetic Protestantism: the congregation. Because a *family* of trust and helpfulness was fostered in these organizations, they served as viable and natural "training grounds" for group participation. Here, in a secure milieu of fellow believers, the rules of "self-government" and service to the group could be taught. A push toward civic activism, yet also toward a goal-oriented individualism crystallized, leaving a broad imprint on colonial America and the early U.S.

Owing to the centrality of work and the religious significance of successful trade and profit, and the strictness of the ascetic's adherence to God's Commandments, trust, truthful advice, and the ethic of fair play became firm ideals, also in commercial relationships. These ideals carried over, although to a varying extent as a consequence of regional differences, into the political sphere and erected strong ideals of truthfulness, social trust, good will, and fair play in public life. These ideals took hold long

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

before the onset of industrialization. A civic sphere of "public ethics" came into existence and elected officials were expected to abide by its high standards.

According to Weber, such strong civic ideals were rare in other nations, and cannot be understood as evolutionary concomitants of industrialization. Moreover, their juxtaposition with a world mastery individualism was, he believed, extremely unusual. Indeed, on the basis of a common foundation in ascetic Protestantism, civic values were reciprocally intertwined with this activist individualism. As it became substantial and broad in scope, the civic realm became empowered to direct individualism, pulling it away, as asceticism became weaker and failed to do so, from an exclusive focus upon an egocentric striving for material prosperity and toward the improvement of community standards. Civic ideals also prevented this individualism from readily following a course of decline into merely instumental, self-oriented calculations of interests and advantage. On the other hand, activist individualism in the Colonial era and early U.S., because it endowed persons with the strength and self-confidence to act "in the world" and to defend—in moral terms if necessary—values, principles, and "rights," even against great obstacles, repeatedly rejuvenated public ethics. Indeed, this "strong individualism" might be perceived as a social-cultural necessity if a viable notion of the individual's right to oppose authority and power is to be retained. In turn, due to the high demands the civic sphere placed upon persons to reform communities on behalf of ethical values, world-mastery individualism was perpetually invigorated. A mutually sustaining dynamic crystallized.

Hence, from a comparative perspective, an unusual dualism characterized this political culture. Moreover, it broke asunder the iron cage dichotomy in which a "public" realm, pervaded by technical, administrative, and market constraints, devoid of civic ideals, and dominated by raw power and calculations of interests unbounded by values, called forth its polar opposite: an apolitical, deeply private refuge in which intimate relations of warmth and compassion were cultivated. In the Colonial era and early U.S., civic ideals of honesty, fair play, social trust, good will, and equality of treatment—an *ethos*—penetrated the public domain and "uplifted" an activist individualism away from sheer interest-oriented pursuits, power-seeking machinations, egocentrism, and indulgence in the unlimited "temptations" of daily life.

Of course, Weber knew that in the America of the last fin de siècle unlimited opportunities for corruption existed, that public ethics frequently were not upheld, and that power and crass calculation often prevailed. Indeed, he was aware that ethical action in the public sphere was the exception and that the corrupt politics of "city machines" were widespread. Nonetheless, he perceived the legacies and presence of civic virtues

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

as having significant impact. Quite different parameters and dichotomies characterized the iron cage model, as well as those political cultures in which the state and its laws alone encompass—and monopolize—*all* understandings of the civic domain. The unusual pendulum movement placed into motion by this uniquely American dualism—a broadened civic sphere penetrated by ethical values interweaving intimately with an intensified world-mastering individualism—in large part accounted, Weber argued, for the dynamism and restlessness characteristic of the American political culture.

Although Weber charted the American political culture's classic dualism, he did not adequately identify the manner in which it would become weakened. He expected that large-scale bureaucratization would accompany industrialization in the U.S., and thus the power and prestige of civil servants and managers would be enhanced. As functionaries in possession of specialized knowledge and capable of concentrating power in large organizations entered into policy-making and intruded more and more into domains of decision-making appropriately ones of open political debate, party conflict, and the struggle of ideas, the few remaining legacies of civic sphere ideals, Weber feared, would be whittled down.

In recent years, social commentators have lamented a "loss of the civic" and of public ethics. However, this transformation has occurred for reasons Weber only partially identified. Up to now, American politics have repeatedly been marked by waves of populist protest against bureaucratization, and no cohesive caste of functionaries has evolved. Compared to Europe and Japan, the extent to which the American economy and government have avoided extreme bureaucratization while reaching the stage of post-industrialism seems unique. Instead, civic values have weakened more as a consequence of a ubiquitous consumerism and an extraordinarily vibrant entertainment culture. Both are attractive domains opposed to, and competing with, the ideals of the civic sphere.

American individualism appears less and less directed to self-oriented material prosperity and a constellation of civic values, and more and more directed to self-oriented material prosperity and the consumer-entertainment cultures. An intensity unrivalled in other post-industrial nations is apparent. Originally interwoven with, and invigorated by, the civic realm, activist individualism has become severed from this guiding force and now is systematically courted and cultivated by Madison Avenue executives with social science degrees. Civic ideals have been pushed aside and rendered more narrow in scope by a "public sphere" that is now penetrated widely by the consumer and entertainment industries. Both offer friendliness, comfort, excitation, images of romance, and hope for the individual's prosperity.

The new "political culture" differs from the old in yet another manner. While the earlier dualism implied a strong civic component that held

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in check a decline of individualism into egocentrism, the recent dualism places very different barriers against self-orientation: a contribution to community improvement, let alone an overcoming of evil on behalf of God's greater glory, now fails to pull and direct individualism. Instead, there are subtle and intense pressures to conform to "the fashionable," "the hot," and "the trendy." Whereas the earlier individualism/civic dualism invoked a mutually sustaining dynamism that invigorated *both,* the individualism/consumer-entertainment dualism pursues a different agenda: rather than erecting obstacles against the individual's orientation to material prosperity, the consumer-entertainment cultures are aligned with it. In the long-term, this is bound to weaken individualism and the civic sphere, as well as societal dynamism and openness, and to strengthen an unequivocal drift toward massive social conformism.

Weber would not have been surprised at this paradoxical turn in which a single factor originating from an orientation to transcendent commandments and religious values—a self-reliant and world mastery individualism—in a later historical epoch subverted its indispensable sustaining counterpart: substantial and demarcated civic sphere ideals. He had discovered such ironic twists and unforeseen consequences of historical magnitude throughout the histories of the East and West. They stand at the very foundation of his comparative-historical sociology.

However, this depiction of the new American political culture, which assumes the near disappearance of civic ideals, stands opposed to two further basic conclusions at the center of Weber's sociological investigations. Both cast a different light upon this monumental transformation. He argued repeatedly that significant developments, once firmly anchored, do not precipitously fade from a nation's social landscape, and not as a consequence of short-term challenges. Rather, and even if dormant for longer periods, they live on, awaiting altered contextual constellations to become strongly influential once again. Furthermore, Weber understood societies as only rarely avoiding continuous, unavoidable, and significant conflict and struggle. Elites and "aristocracies" are formed and soon thereafter new ones appear. Domination is never abolished, as utopian thinkers argued, yet rulership is not permanent either; through conflict and struggle new ruling groups arise continuously.

Cognizance of these two further major tenets of Weber's sociology forces revision of the above scenario. The individualism/consumer-entertainment dualism must be acknowledged as incompletely capturing the new American political culture. Rather, a triumvirate of forces must be recognized: world mastery individualism, the consumer-entertainment industries, and civic sphere ideals. Though threatened, civic ideals live on. At times, amidst the cascading fluctuations of the present, these three spheres, in varying degrees, oppose one another; at other times each of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

them is interpenetrated by, and interwoven with, the others. At times these domains ceaselessly compete with one another; at other times they fall into firm alignments; at still other times a single domain appears dominant.

A tripolar dynamism now pushes the pendulum of the American political culture. Although thoroughly severed from the old dualism, this new configuration is unique and unlike that of any other post-industrial nation. It stands as well in stark contrast to the iron cage model. Max Weber's sociology, at the fin de siècle, assists the identification of its content, parameters, tensions, and internal dynamics.

Eliot Pruzan: Our next speaker is Professor Alfred Pfabigan from the University of Vienna. His books include *Karl Kraus und der Sozialismus* and *Max Adler: Eine Politische Biographie*. He will speak on "A View From Central Europe."

Alfred Pfabigan: Vienna 1896—Vienna 1996: a hundred years changed a lot, and the city which was once the capital of an empire is now the center of a minor state that lost untold talents due to the expulsion of the Jews and the Holocaust. But it is the same city, the famous buildings are still standing and people bear the same names. However a visible difference in discourse can be noted, especially different attitudes towards the "new," (*Ende* and *Wende*), which I want to define.

The fin de siècle Vienna of the last century is said to be an exemplary battlefield of conflicts typical for modernism, but also relevant for post-modernism. The enormous creative potential which gathered in the capital of a declining empire articulated these problems in a way that, for one historical moment, made the city into one of the centers of world culture. The background of these achievements was the crisis of Austrian liberalism, which was more than a crisis of an ideology or the party which represented it. After the crisis year of 1873, broad sections of the rising generation of intellectuals felt alienated, doubted the validity of the seemingly irreversible, power-protected synthesis of liberalism and reason, and cultivated fantasies of "world's end." The shock of modernization occurred under the conditions of a decomposition of public and private values. Schopenhauer, Wagner, and Nietzsche provided the ingredients for new concepts of life reacting to the collective crisis of identity. Aestheticization of the body politic was the remedy for one faction, while the other one had the idea that only a war could save culture.

The general denial of history in the first years of the second republic extended to fin de siècle Vienna. An entire generation of rising intellectuals had to discover "their" Klimt, Kraus, Loos, Schiele, and Wittgenstein in opposition to its teachers and to educational institutions. American scholars like Carl E. Schorske helped to "reimport" fin de siècle Vienna, and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

today's Viennese are proud to live in "Wittgenstein's Vienna"—the title of the famous book by Janik and Toulmin. But the legacy of this epoch is still ambivalent: Wittgenstein's Vienna was also "Hitler's Vienna" (the title of Brigitte Hamann's recently published book) and the list of concepts Hitler acquired in Vienna (as he wrote himself in *Mein Kampf)* is long.

If we look into the evolution of the surviving elements of the last fin de siècle mentality, we have to focus on the central poles of "end" and "turn" (Ende and Wende). Today the feeling of "ending" dominates western and central European societies. It is the "end" of what Ralph Dahrendorf calls the "social democratic century." By that I mean social democratic with a little "s" which is more like the synthesis of liberalism and reason than the ideology of a specific party and is connected to an attitude towards life: a conglomeration of values, expectations, calculable risks in life, and regular action by the state as a result of public consensus. This "ending" attacks Austrian society more strongly than comparable states, because it is an extremely state-oriented society. Private influence even in the form of organized interests is weak: economy, education, cultural life, the social system, even sports are furthered by state finances and organizations. This is exactly where, over decades of creeping crises in nationalized industry, the delegitimization of the social-democratic century began. The uniquely Austrian stratification of power, the so-called social partnership, guaranteed the influence of organized groups of trade unions, agriculture and industry, that were inseparably connected to the state itself. Social partnership and the Austrian version of the social democratic century are inseparable. The ability to regulate this inflated public household helped to legitimize the position of power groups. But this legitimization is endangered by the budgetary crisis. The leading mechanisms of the social democratic century are falling into disrepute as financially unviable, as luxury bought on credit. Moreover, the state can no longer finance new public programs, due to the limits on public debts dictated by the Maastricht treaty. Although Austria still has a dominant political consensus, polarization is beginning: the extremely stable party system has dramatically changed from a system with two large parties, to one of three medium-sized and two small parties—whose limits are still unknown. On the one hand, there is a collective feeling of crisis, resulting from menacing unemployment, from the confrontation with a new type of poverty, and from the threatened modification of the welfare system. On the other hand, resistance to taxes is growing, and is backed by prominent experts, and accompanied by an unconscionable debate about "welfare bums." Whereas the crisis at the turn of the last century was centered in the private sphere, such as gender roles, it now focuses on demands and duties towards and within society.

Another "end" arises from the loss of the privileged position of the older industrialized states. The growing international competition for jobs

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

produces fears that are transformed by means of aggressive language—the metaphor of "war" used at the last fin de siècle is now often heard, for instance, in the "war for jobs." Though this is an international phenomenon, its European version is a consequence of 1989. Europe's fundamental changes after the collapse of the Soviet empire hit Austria especially hard: the country lost its privileged position between the power blocks, along with its feeling of superiority over the socialist countries and their inferior economy.

Thus we recognize pan-European and Austrian feelings of an "end" and its transformation into collective feelings of crisis. But, despite the fact that the word "turn" belongs to central European political folklore, there is neither the feeling of a "turn" nor a will to the "new"—which was so characteristic for the last Viennese fin de siècle.

Austria does not really seem to be engaged in the coming turn of the century. But this is not the result of a general disregard of the charm of round numbers. The celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the second republic and the birthday of one-thousand years of Austria were quite popular. Their disproportionate public interest requires an explanation. Apparently, the republic has an unbalanced account with the past. Still, I hesitate to say this, because it tends to be connected to the cliché of the country suffering from its fascist past and fighting against neo-fascism. The issues are more complicated. As the eminent historian Friedrich Heer found, the characteristic tensions of Austria's political culture are older than fascism and result from the period of counter-reformation, of which fascism itself was a consequence. Furthermore, we need to examine the country's postwar mentality, in order to understand Austria's confrontations with national socialism and its impact on the new fin de siècle mentality.

We know that the founding myth of the second republic was the idea of a "point zero": due to the Moscow declaration the country defined itself as Hitler's first victim. A certain continuity among the elite of national socialism and postwar Austria was hidden underneath, and the moral confrontation with national socialism and especially with Austria's part in the Third Reich's crimes were neglected. Such collective behavior can also be observed in other peoples of the former "Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis". In their book *The Inability to Mourn*, Alexander and Margarete Mitscherlich diagnosed postwar Germany as suffering from the loss of the beloved Führer. The loss of collective fantasies of greatness and the perception of their own guilt induced collective melancholy. The Germans defended themselves against this melancholy by transforming it into the collective mania of reconstruction. The political sterility of Adenauer's Germany was interpreted by the Mitscherlichs as resulting from the denial of the past: they describe Germany as oriented to a non-reality, as de-realized.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

This thesis also fits Austria, but its relevance is minor, given that the Mitscherlichs' book is dated 1967. The generation of fascism and reconstruction is beginning to die out. Now we are confronted with the problems of the second generation which, among other things, result from the educational style of the forties and fifties. Today's dominating generation, which also was the generation of 1968—the children of Marx and Coca-Cola—grew up under contradictory conditions: the coexistence of absent parents and authoritarian rituals of education, because it was based on lies about the past, gave no social stability and was present in the history of the families themselves. In descriptions of the mentality of fifties and sixties youth, one very often finds reflections about skepticism and mistrust. The fact that knowledge of the Holocaust had to be acquired against the resistance of teachers and educational institutions gave this mistrust a collective legitimization.

Helm Stierlin, a German-American psychoanalyst, uses the concept of the "bounded delegate," the youngster who leaves his parents' home but remains bounded and is unconsciously obliged to fulfill his parents' missions, and to solve their problems in his own life. This concept describes the relation of the children of the generation of war and reconstruction towards the problems inherited from their parents.

The events of 1968 were international in scope: its Austrian version can be compared to the crisis of 1873. The rebelling generation transformed the mistrust into provocation and social utopianism. Behind the slogan of "fantasy reaching for power" was hidden a profound disconnectedness of Austria's generation of '68 to the special problems of their country. Even in the following "years of the left" no special Austrian leftist strategy developed. Instead, they returned to the past and reconstructed the classical conflicts of leftists: declared Trotzkyists fought the Stalinists.

Nevertheless, the generation of '68 was successful in its "long march through the institutions." Its social-political success paralleled the Kreisky Era. Under the leadership of this charismatic chancellor important steps were taken in the modernization and normalization of the country. But two strange phenomena accompanied these advances: the fact that the country had a "Jewish" chancellor did not produce a discussion about the past but strengthened the forces of inner repression; the process of modernization, of an adaptation towards other industrialized countries and the intellectual opening of the republic was accompanied by the development of a superior self-image. The republic was vain and defined itself as a model international country. The pope confirmed this myth by naming Austria "an island of the blessed."

The Waldheim affair brought Austria down to earth. In the countries where the thesis of Austria as Hitler's victim had been accepted, things changed dramatically, and the Austrians were perceived as impostors. The

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact that a president who was elected by the majority had to spend the rest of his life on the American watch-list was a gigantic insult to the national vanity. The informal international sanctions, especially in the field of culture, did not hit the "typical" Waldheim voter but rather the intellectual and morally sensible sectors of the population. Mistrust by the postwar generation, which had many sources, now had international confirmation. This mistrust was transformed into anger, which remains one of the central topics of Austria's political life.

The international reception of the Waldheim case was concentrated on what Waldheim really did. The internal political dimension of the affair was neglected, especially the fact that Waldheim was the ideal focus with which to settle the latent generational conflict, comparable to the generational conflict after 1873. The enormous self-criticism of Austrian society in the years after the Waldheim case was neglected as well. Hundreds of books on every aspect of Austrian behavior during the Nazi period were published, shocking the foundations of the society. Critical positions, which for forty years had existed at the margins of public interest, now moved to the center. Historians became the exclusive arbiters of moral authority. This process is as yet unfinished: Austria still is confronting itself with self-indictments.

The complicated consequences of this self-criticism are central to my thesis. Paradoxically, measures which should have been taken in 1945 are being taken fifty years later. There is an element of "ending" in this self-criticism, which says nothing about the future: it is the "end" of the postwar-period, comparable to 1989. But I believe that this self-criticism is the central moral event of the second republic, and may be the basis for creating an as-yet unarticulated future. None of the other peoples of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis have made comparable efforts to clear their past during the last ten years.

Nevertheless, we should not overlook the intellectual sterility of Austria's public life which results from the fact that so much energy was bound up in reflections on the past. Mourning the guilt of the beloved or hated father has become a business—part of the routine of marketing strategies. Many of these utterances have been accepted as authentic. Even the best representatives of Austria's prolonged self-criticism employ Austria's traditional means of expression. This is not helpful in matters such as exaggeration as art, self-hate—which has been named "morbus austriacus" (the Austrian disease) by Friedrich Heer—and the tendency towards apocalyptic thinking. The characteristic fantasy of collapse is connected to the idea of a repetition of the past: the analogy with the 1930s plays an important role in Austria's political discourse. This idea seems to deliver the outer form for other, unspoken anxieties about the future. In any case, it is an unrealistic idea which ignores the dynamics of history. An influential part of the moral

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and intellectual elite of the country is still punishing its parents, which may perhaps even be desirable; the idea being that "what happened to our parents will never happen again." Given the chance, we will make it better.

In any case, the future lies in the repetition of the past, which reminds me of Milan Kundera's description of peoples' relations towards the past and the future. No one, he says, is really interested in the future, an "indifferent emptiness . . . On the other side the past is full of life, her face makes us angry and insults us, so that we want to destroy it or paint it new. People only want to be masters of the future to change the past." But isn't this a remake of the de-realization described by the Mitscherlichs?

Again, as in the new evaluation of fin de siècle Vienna, views from the outside remain helpful. The German political scientist, Claus Leggewie, for instance, published a widely-discussed article about Austria as a "normal" country. This comparison destroys the idea of Austria's uniqueness as good or bad—a central part of its identity. At the moment, one can observe a new process of self-reflection, beyond Messianism and demonization, in the framework of "normalization." An essential part of normalization is Austria's self-definition as a minor state, as a country learning to act independently in the European Union and accepting the second republic as a lucky historical period—in which a hitherto unknown social stability was combined with prosperity, social justice and democratic participation.

The concepts of "rationality" and "subjectivity" are ambiguous; I prefer to use them in the following way: that after a period of "de-realization," of a collective "subjectivity," which was a manifest form of irrationality, Austria has achieved a new collective "rationality" which I believe is precious.

Robert Wistrich: My question is for Mr. Pfabigan. My impression of Austria's fin de siècle culture was that even though a number of artists and thinkers were indeed forward-looking, the overall sense of that period was also very nostalgic for an earlier age of stability. In many respects it seems to me that even then there was a retreat into the past. What we call modernism and modernist culture, in its Viennese version, contained strong conservative elements, which was part of its special flavor. I would say that Austrian modernism, unlike its counterparts in Berlin or Paris or London, had a more conservative and apolitical character which derived from things which you in fact indicated: a crisis of liberalism, a public sphere which was not receptive to social change, a paralysis in political life. Of course, a hundred years ago there existed a cosmopolitan, multi-national empire with very creative contributions coming from a huge *hinterland* of Jews, Hungarians, and Slavs which is not available today.

The second point relates to the thesis of Lord Dahrendorf about the Social Democratic century. I have some difficulties in looking at the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

twentieth century in those terms. Whether we take Austria or any other country, it seems to me that that this thesis is valid in a very limited way. Before World War II, in the first half of the twentieth century, it was only true in Vienna for the period from 1918 to 1934 and even then Social Democracy was highly controversial and fiercely contested. After 1945, it seems to be true only during the Kreisky era, which stands out as something very special, as a unique moment in Austria's history during this century. I understand that you made your point about Social Democracy in a broader sense, not just in terms of political parties. Nevertheless, even if I agree that in Austria the welfare state has played an important role, I still find the term "social democratic" questionable, and would be interested in your elaboration on that.

Alfred Pfabigan: First, I think your question neglects the "will to modernism," which is expressed for instance by Aldolf Loos. He always speaks about the modern man with his modern nerves, who hates ornamentation. Loos describes the evolution of culture as the way from ornament to function. You also neglect the comparison Berlin-Vienna, which was the center of an intense debate. Berlin: a developed city, a city with aggressive industrialization was praised by some Viennese modernists. You neglect the self-criticism of Austria as retarded, as the sick man on the Danube, as declining, immobile which was articulated in this debate. You are right first in reflecting historicism, the style of the Ringstrasse. But the Ringstrasse was a concept of the 1860s, 1870s, and 1880s, and not directly of the turn of the century. It is right that many modernists were strangely ambivalent. Adolf Loos, for instance, was a modernist par excellence, but went back to the craftsman's art of "Biedermeier"; or Karl Kraus, a modernist, who in his fight against social ornament went back in his linguistic theories to the German Romantics. In Vienna we probably had no pure modernists, but a battle between modernisms.

To the second question: the concept of the social-democratic century is broader than the ideas of the social democratic party. That the state, for instance, is responsible for women's emancipation, that women should have a role in institutions, and other ideas that are accepted in western societies are part of what Dahrendorf calls the social democratic century, which gives the state an important role.

Speaker: Is there any sentiment in Austria to follow the model of Switzerland in the future? You point out that Austria is no longer on the frontier between East and West. Are there any people who say, let's just give up the benchmarks and be like the Swiss, let's mind our own business. Is Switzerland an attractive model to anybody in Austria?

Alfred Pfabigan: Switzerland was an attractive model in the fifties because of its neutrality. But now Austria is a member of the European

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

community and Switzerland is not. Despite the fact that electoral participation in the last election for the European parliament was not as high as we expected, I think Austria takes its role in the United Europe very, very seriously. This is a basic difference.

Peter Diamandopolis: In the movement in this century from rationality to subjectivity it may appear that we've reached a certain impasse. Are there grounds for believing this truly to be the case and are there are any grounds for thinking that one can get beyond this impasse in some important way either in this nation or anywhere else?

James Davison Hunter: I'm not sure there is a way to overcome this impasse. I think the sociological significance of looking at religion and in particular at orthodoxy, like American evangelicalism—although it could be other forms of religion and other kinds of orthodoxies—is that you have the possibility, at least theoretically, of communities of resistance to either hyperrationality or hypersubjectivity. Yet I argue that within religion and within the orthodoxies, and I would say in evangelicalism in particular, you have the full unadulterated, unmitigated embrace of precisely the culture of subjectivism that has come on the heels of its own embrace of rationalism. This kind of accommodation or assimilation on the part of religion and religious orthodoxy is done deliberately, explicitly, and yet still unwittingly. In fact, it thinks it is maintaining continuity with the historic traditions, but it is doing so in such a way that it is gutting its traditions from the inside out.

Stephen Kalberg: I mentioned a manner in which, according to Weber's analysis of the U.S., there has been a decline in the civic sphere's viability. He did not conclude that this would result in an enormous strengthening of the subjective; rather he forsaw more bureaucratization. I concluded, on the other hand, that a triumvirate of forces now compete against each other: world-mastery individualism, the consumer-entertainment industries, *and* civic sphere ideals. Yes, within this triumvirate, the "free space," so to speak, for the development of egocentric individualism is wider and deeper than was the case under conditions of the earlier world-mastery individualism/civic sphere dualism.

Your question still remains: are we truly at an impasse? Weber, time and again, in looking very broadly historically and comparatively, found that periods which seemed to be impasses and appeared to be ones in which really nothing could be resolved, started moving again a few generations later. Usually the turn resulted from a combination of forces—forces already there, yet new forces as well, causing some shifting and then a rejuvenation. Given his "long view"as a sociologist who practiced something

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

called "universal history," he would conclude that impasses are temporary. This offers little consolation to those who today feel in the midst of an overwhelming and unending impasse. It is true, in several cases he noted longer-term impasses (China, India, ancient Egypt). However, his sociological writings do not depict the modern West in this manner.

Session II: Psychology: From the Cases of Hysteria to the Therapeutic Society

Morris Eagle: As we all know psychoanalysis began with the study of hysteria, although the study of hysteria did not begin with psychoanalysis. Investigations of and interest in hysteria and related phenomenon as hypnosis, somnambulism, automatic writing, suggestion and so on were in full swing when Freud and Breuer came upon the scene, although the "talking cure" and ideas such as catharsis and abreaction of strangulated affect contained the seeds of what was later to become psychoanalytic theory and treatment. Freud and Breuer's early conception of hysteria was not essentially different from the non-psychoanalytic formulations of Charcot, Janet, and Bernheim. The decisive moment and starting point for psychoanalysis came with Freud's claim that hysterical symptoms were not the consequences of constitutional weakness interacting with a precipitating trauma, but the result of a mental content—a thought, a memory, a wish, a desire—that was radically incompatible with and unacceptable to the patient's ego, that is with the patient's sense of herself or himself and of what is moral and immoral, acceptable or shameful. With this move Freud altered the conception of what constitutes trauma and also hysterical symptoms. Later, of course, other neurotic and even psychotic symptoms were transformed from automatic organic happenings to quasi-actions, which like all human actions entailed purpose, motive, desire, conflict, self-image, and inner standards of morality and immorality. Thus the appropriate method for dealing with psychic distress and dysfunction became psychotherapy rather than hypnosis or organic treatments. Furthermore, and this leads directly into the topic of this panel, since we all have desires, thoughts, feelings, and fantasies about which we're conflicted, the applications and appropriateness of psychotherapy was no longer limited to those with esoteric and strange symptoms but could now be extended to all. We could now truly be characterized as a therapeutic society or perhaps, more accurately, as a society preoccupied with the therapeutic.

I would now like to introduce Helen Meyers. She is Clinical Professor of Psychiatry at Columbia University and the North American Representative in the Executive Council of the International Psychoanalytical Association.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Helen Meyers: A hundred years of psychoanalysis—starting in Vienna in 1896 with the *Studies of Hysteria*, or more properly in 1900 with the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Psychoanalysis then and now. A great deal has changed in psychoanalysis in these hundred years—in parallel with its cultural, philosophic and economic surroundings. Indeed I am not sure whether the theme of this symposium, Breaking Traditions, be best applied to psychoanalysis itself since its beginning.

Freud certainly broke with tradition when he created psychoanalysis—as a psychological theory, a treatment method and an investigative tool—with his stress on the unconscious, unconscious motivation, unconscious fantasy, and psychic determinism, his discovery of infantile sexuality, and his theory of drives, his revelation of intrapsychic conflict, the infantile roots of trauma and conflict resolution, and psychic reality. But, while these basic concepts have been maintained, much has also been changed and added. From a monolithic and somewhat authoritarian theory in Freud's day, psychoanalysis has moved to a position of egalitarianism and pluralism. While in the early days deviance was not tolerated and their originators like Rank, Jung, and Adler were excluded from the psychoanalytic movement—except for Ferenczi who, though uneasily, was permitted to remain within the group—today there is an acceptance of multiple frames of reference within the international psychoanalytic world: Freudian structural theory, modern ego psychology, British object relations theory, modern, Kleinian-Bionian theory, American object relations theory, self-psychology, French Lacan—to name the leading theories. However this acceptance is neither unanimous nor unqualified, but covers a whole range of attitudes. There are those who, while aware of the existence of different psychoanalytic theories or frames of reference, feel they are incompatible and are convinced that one theory is more meaningful, coherent and explanatory, and therefore preferable. Thus a classic Freudian American ego psychologist like Leo Rangel, for example, will feel that the ego psychologic frame of reference is sufficiently inclusive and applicable to all psychoanalytic activity—although he will have accepted extension and innovations within this framework over years; and ego psychology, as practiced nowadays, is a far cry from the original Freudian view. Similarly, in England, a current British Kleinian analyst like Betty Joseph will apply Kleinian-Bionian concepts to all psychoanalytic work, though this modern Kleinian view is a quite modified version of the original work of Melanie Klein. Then there are those analysts who feel there is merit in a pluralistic view and that different psychoanalytic theories, each equally complete and meaningful in themselves, though incompatible with each other, are applicable and useful for different pathologic conditions, such as neurotic characters, narcissistic personality disorder, or borderline conditions. Then there are those analysts, as described by Fred Pine in his book *Four*

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Psychologies, who propose that aspects of the four frames of reference dominant in America—drive, ego, self, and object relations theory—are *clinically* useful and should all be applied in every analytic treatment, while theoretically, this is the theories themselves, cannot be integrated. And finally, there are those of us who feel strongly that, while on the one hand, we subscribe to pluralism in theories, to maintain their roots and understand their origins and differences, on the other hand we find that the various frames of reference also parallel, overlap and complement each other and can and should be integrated *both* theoretically and clinically under the larger umbrella of modern ego psychology for a richer and more complete psychoanalytic theory, with object relations theory adding the understanding of earlier development of ego and superego, self-psychology adding to a wider and more meaningful self-concept, a.s.o. Thus the theories can be integrated abstractly, as well as clinically, so that all theories are applicable sooner or later in every analytic case at different times.

To be more specific. It is intriguing, by the way, to note that the actual titles chosen for the different sessions presented at this impressive, almost all inclusive symposium, each session addressing a different major area of "breaking traditions," referring to important changes in social structure, philosophy, literature, and history—titles such as "Social Science: From Rationality to Subjectivity" or "Philosophy: From Metaphysics to Language Philosophy" also coincide and reflect some of the changes and major trends within the narrower field of psychoanalysis and psychoanalytic thought itself and indeed still are areas of some important controversies in the field today, as I shall try to briefly survey here. Perhaps, though, this correspondence is not surprising, since all cultural and intellectual areas do overlap and impact on each other and are not, nor can they be, discussed in isolation. Thus changes in one area would find correspondence in another.

In line then, with the title of our first session on social sciences: "From Rationality to Subjectivity," there has been a similar shift in the psychoanalytic attitude. Freud started a "dialogue with unreason" in stressing the Unconscious, which he postulated as ruled by irrational, primary process thinking and the pleasure principle. This earned him initial praise from Michel Foucault. However, Freud also stressed the need for rational, secondary process thinking, the reality principle, to overcome and civilize the unconscious cauldron of drives with the goal of treatment as "where id was there ego shall be." This rational, "normalizing" attitude then quickly became the focus of Foucault's attack. Freud believed in logic and reason and objective external reality balancing and in opposition to the psychic reality which he equated with the unconscious drives. Freud posited the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis as making the unconscious conscious and the curative goal of reconstruction of the real past—similar to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reconstruction of an archeologic find. Today analysts are divided. Some, particularly child analysts, are concerned with and look to find the historic truth, while others look to understand and find the person's inner subjective truth or psychic reality. Psychic reality today no longer refers only to Freud's unconscious drives, but to each individual's internal *Weltanschauung* (view of the world), a subjective compromise formation or unconscious fantasy molded by the impact of both early experience, unconscious wishes, needs expectations and fears. His or her psychic reality is the only meaningful reality by which each person processes all external and internal events. Some analysts go further, abandoning the idea of the existence or relevance of historic truth, but speak only of narrative truth—the establishment of the most coherent and meaningful life story as expostulated by Roy Schafer and influenced by the concept of dialogue created by Richard Rorty. Those of us who still use reconstruction in the analytic treatment process work with the assumption of establishing the subjective psychic reality of the patient's childhood, not the objective real past of mother and child interaction or external "facts." Others have abandoned reconstruction altogether and work only in the here and now of transference—as expanded by Merton Gill in his emphasis on the here and now—and on transference interpretation only, and transference interpretation early in analysis at that. Others, such as current self psychologists in their emphasis on working from a position within the patient's subjective conscious self-experience, essentially are working in the here and now as well, although in their "interpretive-reconstructive" comments they give weight to a general reconstruction of early maternal empathic failure.

The original early image of the analysts as the objective observer, based on Freud's description of the analytic attitude as likened to the uninvolved surgeon or the opaque mirror that only mirrors the patient, also has been abandoned and replaced to a large extent by the concept of the subjectivity. Though not new, the concept of intersubjectivity has been the center of controversy. Intersubjectivity refers to the awareness of the analytic dyad as a two-person system, two people with their subjective reactions interacting, impacting and being impacted on by each other, even creating a dialogue and a narrative. This, of course, is relative in degree. Since one person, the patient, is the subject of concern, concentrated on and purposely explored in depth. The other, the analyst, has a position of relative distance and relative security, enabling him or her to function in the relationship in a more self-aware and observant way by the use of what we call his "second" or "work self," based on training, theoretic knowledge and personal analysis, as well as presumably less central involvement. In the psychoanalytic encounter then, the analyst's countertransference—the total subjective experience of the analyst, in the larger sense, or, in the narrow sense, the unconscious influence of the analyst's internal world left over

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

from earlier unresolved conflicts and object relationships has now been accepted as universal. Originally conceived of as only an interference to be gotten rid of by analysis or self-analysis, countertransference moved to a position of usefulness in understanding the patient's inner world of self and objects, that is the patient's transference, as the analyst's countertransference to the patient's transferential message. And finally, most currently, for many analysts, countertransference has become an essential tool by way of projective identification and projective counter-identification, for the understanding of, or even impacting on, the patient—by some analysts even shared with the patient in self-revelation in order to further the analytic process.

Next we come to session II on psychology and science: "From the Case of Hysteria to the Therapeutic Society"—the title of this session.

Surely the last hundred years have seen a shift from the producer ethos to the consumer ethos, from the moral, religious society to the therapeutic society in America (T. Jackson Lears), where the Protestant work ethic has been replaced with the value of self-actualization and fulfillment and what makes you "feel happy"; there is "no place of grace," but stress is on gratification, the rise and acceptance of narcissism. How much psychoanalytic thought has contributed to this shift, how much psychoanalytic therapy has made it possible—as it has been accused of—or how much psychoanalytic thought only offers a commentary and understanding of this aspect of human nature is perhaps hard to say, though one tends to think the latter. Surely, however, from its humble beginnings as a cure for a case of hysteria, psychoanalytic thought (as a general psychology) by today has permeated every aspect of our culture from academic, literature, literary criticism, psychobiography to films and TV, the mass media, to political debates, and self-revelation. At the same time, psychoanalysis as a therapy has receded in importance. Cases of hysteria or other symptoms are more likely to be treated nowadays by other treatment modalities and briefer methods such as medication, behavior modification, group or brief psychotherapy. But for us in the field, psychoanalysis or "depth psychology" remains the treatment of choice for neurotic character disorders, narcissistic and borderline conditions. Psychoanalysis as a research tool, the single clinical case study (Freud's third interest in psychoanalysis) has lost much credence in the scientific community, and there is a push to apply more "scientific" research methodology to study psychoanalysis from the outside, to define its components and process and validate its premises and outcome.

Now, similarly to the movement in philosophy, "From Metapsychology to Language Philosophy," which you will hear about in another panel tomorrow, there has been some movement in psychoanalysis from Metapsychology toward linguistics or language psychoanalysis,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

though most psychoanalysts still find metapsychology or "pure" theory, defined by Webster's as "speculation about the origins, structure and function of the mind and about the relation between the mental and the physical, regarded as supplemental to psychology," to be differentiated from experience-near clinical theory, enormously useful. The human mind needs theory to organize, to validate and to keep it company. Others, like George Klein or Roy Schafer, have advocated discarding metapsychology as too theoretical, too abstract, too experience-distant and not needed in addition to clinical theory. And some, like Lacan in France and Schafer in America, following post-structuralism and deconstruction, have turned to linguistics, each in their own way. Lacan, influential in Europe and in American academia, assigned language the central position as the basic unit of the mind; Schafer stressed the importance and meaning of language in his concept of the narrative created in the analytic dialogue and in his formulation of action language.

Now let me turn to the rest of psychoanalysis and briefly highlight some of the major and significant changes and current trends and controversies in psychoanalytic theory and technique since its inception, putting them into their proper historical context: "History Then and Now."

New theories and technical innovations arose from sources within psychoanalysis, such as lacunae in understanding found in the old theory and practice or new data produced in analytic work, suggesting new explanations, or from outside psychoanalysis, with new knowledge gained from related fields such as developmental child observation, studies in cognitive and other physiologic development, or from pressure from social, economic or philosophic changes our culture. As mentioned above, however, the most basic concepts of the "talking cure" have remained steady in what we define as "psychoanalysis." These include the "psychoanalytic situation" with its rules of regularity of frequence, duration of sessions, position, verbal communication, and relative abstinence, although there have been and still are controversies on all of these, i.e. the centrality and intensity of frequency, position, duration, and neutrality. And it included basic concepts such as psychic reality, the unconscious fantasy and motivation, psychic conflict and trauma, psychic determinism, steady functions maintained as "psychic structure," and genetic, developmental, adaptive, and economic or quantitative points of view. Thus, the different psychoanalytic theories or frames of reference, while they must have the above concepts in common to be called "psychoanalytic," they may differ, can be compared, contrasted, equated, overlap, and complement each other in terms of content, such as *which* development are we concerned with, *what* is in conflict and *where* is the conflict cleavage line, what is the view of reality, how is the model of the mind pictures, what is the role of object relations, how is pathology constituted and conceived of, and what would

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

be the related treatment techniques and therapeutic action? Where were we on these issues to start with and where are we now, what has been changed and discarded, what has been retained as useful, what is still controversial? Let me get back to these questions after a very brief historical overview.

Freud started his studies in hysteria with the idea of a reality trauma—parental seduction—where both unpleasant affect and memory of the event had to be repressed. As Freud discovered and elaborated on infant sexuality and the vicissitudes of the libido and the centrality of the Oedipus complex in normal development and in pathology, this reality explanation of pathology was dropped and replaced by internal fantasy. As you probably know, there has been much controversy about the reason for this shift, i.e. the genuine conviction or political pressure. However, be that as it may, Freud spent the next twenty years elaborating his libido theory to the relative neglect of the ego and reality object relations in order to stress the importance of these unacceptable instincts. At this point the agencies of the mind were the systems: Unconscious, Preconscious and Conscious; the conflict was between gratification of the sexual instinct and conscious reality opposition; development addressed only the ontogeny of the libido; the Oedipus complex was central. Not all of Freud's early followers stayed with these conceptualizations. Rank shifted the key of pathology in the "Birth Trauma" as both the prototype and central configuration of the neuroses. Jung stressed a more mythical, inherited and archaic concept of soul and ego ideal. Adler developed a theory of mastery and "masculine protest" he called individual psychology. And Ferenczi and his Hungarian followers, Imre Herman and the Balints in the twenties and thirties, shifted the core conflict from the oedipal complex to earlier faulty mother/child interactions, developing such concepts as the "Basic Fault" and "Confusion of Tongues" between mother and child and related treatment techniques such as "indulgences" and "corrective essential experience," practiced by Alexander later in America, to compensate for the early deprivation. Most of these "innovators" in Freud's time, except for Ferenczi, as mentioned earlier, were considered dissidents by Freud and extruded from the analytic movement, an attitude toward "deviation" and innovative practices until fairly recently by analytic orthodoxy. More currently, however, this attitude has changed markedly and pluralism of theory, as discussed above, is being widely accepted, used and taught. Certainly all the work with children, child observation and child analysis, the development lines of Anna Freud and Mahler's separation-individuation theories, even Melanie Klein's paranoid and depressive position, have been integrated in today's psychoanalytic thinking, and have shifted the emphasis from the centrality of the Oedipus complex to include the nuclear conflicts of earlier object relations, the rapprochement phase, the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

depressive position, the earliest mother/child empathic interactive failures and early archaic fantasy.

But now to continue: In 1920, with the First World War, Freud, plagued by man's destructiveness, added his concept of the aggressive or Death Instinct to his armamentarium, explaining aggression and masochism, and supplying energy to the critical agency with the ego—the later superego. By 1923 and 1926, dissatisfied with the cleavage line of conflict between conscious and unconscious, Freud rearranged his model into a new tripartite model, the id, ego, and superego of the structural theory; the conflict now falling between these agencies and their functions, all moderated by the ego. It became clear that the ego, reality and adaptation had been neglected in the interest of the instincts, and Freud's followers in the thirties now laid increasing stress on the ego in what became known as Ego Psychology. Anna Freud elaborated on the defensive functions of the ego, W. Reich on character, H. Hartman on the autonomous functions and adaptive functions of the ego, and Piaget—not an analyst—elaborating on the development of cognition. The ego now had energies, anxiety signals, and motivations of its own and its development was studied in terms of defensive, autonomous, adaptive, and integrative functions, and its role in internal and external object relations. With the Second World War, Anna Freud (and her father) moved to England and Hartman to America where they continued their ego psychological work. By the fifties it became apparent that not enough was known about earlier pre-oedipal development. Child observations added new knowledge about the importance and vicissitudes of mother/child interactions. At the same time, an attempt to apply psychoanalytic techniques to more primitive pathologies—the "widening scope of psychoanalysis" described by Leo Stone in America and Rosenfeld in England—also pointed to a need to understand early object relations, that is relations between the self and others, externally interpersonally and their internal intrapsychic representation. Edith Jacobson focused on depression to study the self and the object world in the fifties, while Margaret Mahler in the sixties first focused on autism and symbiotic psychosis in children then studied normal mother/child interaction in her nursery, formulating her sequence of separation-individuation, constituting the beginning of object relations theory in America.

In the meantime in England in the thirties, Melanie Klein, a child analyst working with psychotic children, and taking off from Freud's destructive instinct, had founded her school of British object relations sometimes referred to as an "id mythology," in which fantasies of primitive aggression and primitive defenses against aggression—such as projective identification and splitting—play the major role in psychic development. Klein's theories (elaborated by Fairbairn, Rosenfeld, Winnicott and Bion), while popular in England and Latin America,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

remained essentially isolated from psychoanalysis in America. It was not until Otto Kernberg in the seventies formulated and presented his object relations theory based on the work of Mahler, Jacobson and Klein, that British object relations theory became integrated into American psychoanalytic thought. "Object relations theory" then, as defined by Kernberg, studies how early interpersonal object relations (relations between parent and child) are internalized into intrapsychic self and object representations and internal object relations, which in turn form the internal structures of ego and superego on the one hand, and impact on later interpersonal object relations on the other. Kernberg arrived at his theories by working with narcissistic personality disorders coming from his previous work with borderline conditions. At the same time in the late sixties and early seventies, Heinz Kohut, also working with narcissistic personality disorders, but coming from the opposite direction, i.e. the unsuccessful analysis of supposedly neurotic characters, found a need to formulate these more primitive pathologies in terms of arrested development of the self due to failure in early maternal empathy, leading to his theories of self-psychology, the formation of the supraordinate bi-polar self as the center of initiative, and the importance of early parental empathy and the central position of empathy in psychoanalytic treatment.

To summarize briefly some of these changes and comparisons from then to now:

In terms of the visualization of the model of the mind we have moved from postulating a tripartite topographic model consisting of an unconscious, preconscious and conscious to a structural model consisting of an id, ego, and superego; to an emphasis on the dominance of the ego; to an inclusion of internalized object relations—self and object representations linked affectively—forming the basic units within these psychic agencies; and finally to the inclusion of a developing sense of self as an agent and center of initiative, cohesion and esteem—the theories concerning the self being the most controversial.

In terms of relation to reality, psychoanalysis has seesawed from an initial period of concern with objective reality trauma (infantile seduction) to pathology based on unconscious internal drives, conflicts and fantasy, to a return to traumatic real mother/child interaction traumas, cumulative and shock, and failure of early supplies and empathy leading to developmental ego arrests, as well as unconscious conflict and compromise formation. Current preoccupation regarding the preponderance of actual early sexual incestuous abuse vs. Fantasy wish are part of this still ongoing controversy. Freud believed in objective external reality balanced by subjective unconscious psychic reality which he equated with unconscious drives. Current concepts of reality stress psychic reality as the only window through which the individual can view and process the world, this psychic

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

reality having been forged in equal parts by early external experience and perception and by internal needs, wishes and fears and earlier layers of unconscious fantasy compromise formation. Controversy around reality currently puts greater emphasis on early objective reality, particularly by child analysts, self psychologists, and reconstructionists, versus those who advocate emphasis on fantasy and psychic reality; the here and now subjective experience, and even the creation of narrative truth.

Regarding psychic development, psychoanalysis has moved from the neater but more simplistic concern with libidinal development only, to a still rudimentary theory of development of aggression, to a stress on the development of the various aspects of the ego: its functions—defensive, autonomous and internalization—and its content, i.e. self and object representational units, self esteem and continuity over time. The developing infant no longer is seen only as a helpless creature of drives seeking gratification and suffering frustration, but as a creature exposed to and internalizing early interpersonal experience into intrapsychic object relations units, an internal drama of hopes and fears and expectations, and also a creature taking the initiative in seeking self realization, growth, self-esteem and integration.

In terms of psychoanalytic treatment, goals of treatment, therapeutic action and technique, this means that the object of psychoanalysis no longer is simply to make the unconscious conscious. "Where Id was there shall Ego be," known as "Id Analysis," is no longer considered sufficient since unconscious defensive compromises need to be resolved. Resistances, the manifestations of defenses and character during analytic treatment need to be addressed in what is called "resistance" or "character analysis." The clinical concepts themselves have undergone major changes. Transference to the analyst, not only as the object of transference wishes and drives and defenses, but also of displaced concordant and complimentary self and object images, originally seen as an interference, a false connection to the analyst, has become the major window for understanding the inner life of the patient, the major tool to work with, though there still is an argument as to the amount of transference interpretation only (Gill) versus the use of extra transference interpretations (Stone), and about the question of early transference interpretation and the emphasis on the here and now versus the use of reconstruction. Similarly, resistance, seen early on as something to remove or attack (Reich's smashing of "character armor") is now conceptualized as the very essence of understanding the ego's precious defensive way of working; defenses are no longer thought of as something that can or should be eliminated but as part of a compromise formation to be only changed into a more adaptive compromise. Similarly, as discussed earlier, the concept of countertranference, i.e. when the analyst is stuck in an unconscious infantile conflictual identification, or in a unresolved

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

unconscious conflict in response to the patient, originally experienced as a major negative interference which was warned against by Freud and other classical analysts (Annie Reich, for example), to be strictly eradicated by self-discipline, self-analysis or further personal analysis has undergone a metamorphosis over the years. First countertransference became something to recognize and eliminate but also to be used for recognition of the patient's inner world, as to what is going on in the patient that stimulated this countertransference. More recently it has assumed a more central and controversial position for some analysts as a direct indicator, a direct pipeline to the patient's inner world of objects. It would appear then, over the years, that many clinical manifestations, whose appearances were originally experienced as problems have, with better understanding of the clinical process, become central tools in the conduct of an analysis.

Finally, the question of therapeutic action of analysis: Psychoanalysis was conceived of as a talking cure in which the curative process was strictly verbal, interpretation leading to insight, with stress laid on correct interpretation versus incorrect or incomplete interpretation. It would make a difference then which frame of reference would be used since each would interpret a different content: Drive theory would interpret the conflict over drives; object relations theory would interpret the internal drama of conflict over opposing object relations and their necessary defensive split; developmental theory would point to developmental arrests; and self psychology would point to inadequate self-esteem, self-experience, and so on. However, from the beginning, although frowned upon, there were always those who advocated the simultaneous importance of the therapeutic impact of the analytic relationship itself and introduced corresponding technical maneuvers accordingly—to wit Ferenczi's "indulgences," in the 1920s in Europe, Alexander's "corrective emotional experience" later on in America, Kohut's empathic resonance for "transmuting internalization" in Chicago most recently. It is, I believe, currently accepted that both interpretations and relational aspects are necessary components of the therapeutic action of psychoanalysis. Although this relational component is not an artificial, assumed attitude on the part of the analyst as suggested in the above variations of the technique, but is part and parcel of the analytic situation—a consistent, interested, reliable listener, non-judgmental, indestructible, non-retaliating, and therefore a supportive listener, from the classical point of view; a new experience, new object relationship, so different from the one experienced as a child, though now a consciously artificially assumed one, from the point of view of the object relations theorist; an accepting, mirroring, non-questioning, gleam in the eye, an object for temporary identification, from the point of view of the self-psychologist; even an identifactory object on a higher level of integration for temporary use of modeling in terms of the pursuit of the analytic goal, from the point of view

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of the developmentalist. The current questions and controversies revolve only around how much weight should be given to which aspect of therapeutic action—relational or verbal interpretation—and around which interpreted content would be most relevant and timely. It is my opinion, as described in the beginning of this paper, that both relational aspects and interpretation have their place in the analytic enterprise and that the interpretive content from all frames of reference mentioned are of essential value and meaning, at the proper time, in all well-conducted analyses.

In conclusion, let me add just a few words on the current state of the art from a cultural and geographic point of view. From its original Freudian beginning in Central Europe—Vienna, Berlin, Budapest—psychoanalysis has spread throughout the world. Now, America, long dominated by classical ego psychology, also teaches the American brand of object relations theory, as well as self-psychology in some institutes. In England, there is an equal division between Klein and Freud, with the London institute having a Kleinian, a Freudian and an independent tract. In Latin America, Kleinian theory is the dominant theory, with Freud and Lacan in the minority. In France, Lacan, influenced by philosophers like Derrida, has played a major role in the intellectual life of analysts. French analysts, ever eclectic, are also touched by Winnicott, Klein, Bion, and Ferenczi, but repudiate American ego psychology as too reality oriented and superficial. Hungary, emerging from behind the Iron Curtain, following Ferenczi's and Balint's emphasis on mother/child interaction and fueled by Imre Hermann's attachment theories, has maintained its particular brand of object relations theory; and now Russia and Czechoslovakia are setting up psychoanalytic institutes with exchange candidates, instructors and Training Analysts, supported spiritually and financially by groups and individual European and American analysts and a task force of the International Psychoanalytical Association. At the other end of the world as well, Japanese psychoanalysis based on different nuclear complex related to guilt toward the "good" mother, is opening its doors to Western psychoanalysis. And Korea and the rest of the Pacific Rim are setting up new training centers with invited European and American Training Analysts. Psychoanalysis seems to be alive and well and living all over the world.

Morris Eagle: I have the pleasure of introducing Dr. Edith Kurzweil. She is University Professor, Director of the Center of Humanities and Social Thought at Adelphi University and is also editor of *Partisan Review*. Her most recent books are *The Freudians: A Comparative Perspective* and *Freudians and Feminists*.

Edith Kurzweil: Then and now, Freud's psychoanalysis attempted to explain civilizational as well as intrapsychic phenomena; then and now,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

these opposite realms were being confused; then and now, psychoanalysis attracted its acolytes and its enemies; and then and now, it attempted to respond to overwhelming and pressing dangers—wars, economic depressions, and mental illness. But there the similarities stop: psychoanalysis itself has changed our culture; and the individuals trying to answer Freud's questions, whether following or opposing psychoanalysis, now live at a faster pace, and with greater expectations. Moreover, since then populations have multiplied exponentially, technology has changed our daily lives, and, at least in the West, the rights of individuals have expanded. The universal predicaments of humanity, however, have not been, and probably never will be, resolved, although psychoanalytic therapy has taught many people to better deal with their personal problems.

By 1896, Freud had not yet given birth to psychoanalysis. That would wait until 1900, with the publication of *The Interpretation of Dreams*. But he had treated, among others, Caecilie M., Frau Emmy von N., Elisabeth von R., and Lucy R., by talking to them, and trying to uncover their early traumatic experiences for clues to their odd symptoms. He already had published over sixty articles in medical journals, and his joint publication with Breuer, their "Studies in Hysteria," was being reviewed and praised in Germany, Hungary and England: Bleuler had minor reservations; Havelock Ellis was enthusiastic; and the writer Alfred Berger compared their cathartic cures to Orestes's cure in Goethe's *Iphigenia in Tauris*. In the spring and summer of 1896, Freud's father was dying. Most of Freud's biographers agree that he subsequently suffered from depression, from what Ellenberger refers to as his "creative illness." But whatever the cause, on September 21, 1897 he wrote to his friend, Wilhelm Fliess that his seduction theory had collapsed—as a general theory of the origin of neurosis. Fliess had applauded this explanation for the somatization of trauma but, upon reflection and closer observations, Freud concluded that not every female child could have been seduced by her father, but might have had such fantasies just the same. He continued to speculate, however, about exactly how psyche and soma are bound together. It is generally agreed among psychoanalysts and historians that this insight was part of Freud's "self-analysis"—although he himself stated that "true self-analysis is impossible, otherwise there would be no [neurotic] illness" (November 14, 1897). Nevertheless, he had written to Fliess in August of that year, that his self-analysis was necessary, though more difficult than any other. Here, of course, I am not pursuing these theoretical issues, or the arguments they have engendered over our entire century, except to briefly outline the cultural components and circumstances that are likely to have been an influence on Freud, as well as on subsequent developments in psychology.

In 1897, Arthur Schnitzler, the prolific and celebrated Viennese writer, published *Der Reigen* (*The Merry-Go-Round*). In this dramatic work,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

though in a very different way from Freud, he too addressed the compulsive satisfactions and delusions of Eros, and demonstrated how its power could dissolve social hierarchies. He depicted the loose morals of the Viennese, and showed the fragile hold of morality even upon citizens who were determined to uphold traditional values—of family, chastity, honesty, etc. Already in 1892, the poet and playwright, Hugo von Hoffmansthal, had written to Schnitzler that "the most secret . . . inner depths stir in us and the actually demonic, the natural in us, sounds in dark and intoxicating sympathetic vibration." Both Schnitzler and Hoffmansthal—with the rest of *jung Wien*—acknowledged the power of the natural, the instinctual, in every individual as a universal given, and strove to express it in their works—which reached a large popular audience.

Artists and architects also attempted to depict the advent of the new, of new ways of representing the emerging age. Their concerns came together in 1897, in the Secession—an association formed to oppose traditional forms (i.e., the bombastic architecture of the Ringstrasse, the Burgtheater, conventional figurative painting) and which a year later opened its own building—an embodiment of modernism. Its architect, Josef Olbrich, set out to erect a place of quiet elegance, a refuge from the pressures of modern life, where straight walls would be white and gleaming, holy and chaste. Within these pristine spaces, Gustav Klimt's flat paintings, mostly of two-dimensional women, captured attention. Freud was keenly aware of their concerns, and of those of the many other modern artists.

But Freud's professional involvement was in medicine. Vienna had the best hospitals, and talented physicians from around the Austrian empire, and as far away as America, came to study with its doctors, such as Skoda, Krafft-Ebing, and Billroth. Moreover, anyone who was so inclined could attend lectures by the most famous professors at the university. And intellectuals and scientists, the forerunners of the Vienna circle, met in the coffeehouses and discussed world issues from the standpoint of their specific expertise—in a city where a majority of citizens were newcomers. Many of them had arrived from the provinces and were eager to make their way.

At the same time, anti-Semitism was rife. In the 1880s, mass parties—Christian Socials, Pan-Germans, Socialists and Slavic nationalists—had formed. In 1895, the anti-Semite Karl Lueger was elected Mayor of Vienna. Although the liberal emperor Franz Josef refused to ratify his election, two years later he could stem the tide no longer. Franz Josef had freed the Jews in his empire, had allowed them to reside outside ghettos, and to join the professions. But, as Carl Schorske observes,

> during the last five years of the nineteenth century Austria-Hungary seemed to be serving . . . "as a little world in which the big one holds

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> its tryouts"—tryouts for Europe's social and political disintegration. The Habsburg Empire was pulling apart at the seams internally as Europe was internationally: vertically, on nationality lines; horizontally, on class and ideological lines.

The liberal Jews of Vienna, who had neither religious affiliations nor strong convictions, found themselves disliked by the working classes and the peasantry—who were strongly nationalistic and held racial prejudices.

Freud was viscerally aware of this lurking anti-Semitism. In order to support himself and his future wife, he had become a physician rather than a research scientist. By 1896, he had been married for ten years and was the father of six children. He had given up neurology, was practicing as a *Privatdozent*, and slowly had come to elaborate his own system of treatment. But he did not have a prestigious university professorship. He was a liberal, did not practice his religion, but never denied being Jewish. Thus he watched the rise of the New Right in Austria and abroad, but unlike Theodor Herzl who founded the Zionist movement, did not become politically active. And unlike other liberals, he did not join either the socialist or the communist party. Instead, he retreated, as it were, into trying to penetrate to the roots of the psychological reasons that led people to join populist and nationalistic organizations. Undoubtedly, he also took Le Bon's *Psychologie des foules* seriously, which was published in Paris in 1895, even though he did not discuss it at length until 1921, in his *Group Psychology*. Freud wrote to Fliess on October 15, 1897, that his self-analysis had gotten:

> much further. . . . being totally honest with oneself is a good exercise. A single idea of general value dawned on me . . . [The phenomenon] of being in love with my mother and jealous of my father, and I now consider it a universal event in early childhood, even if not so early as in children who have been made hysterical. . . . If this is so, we can understand the gripping power of Oedipus Rex, in spite of all the objections that reason raises against the presupposition of fate. . . . Everyone in the audience was once a budding Oedipus in fantasy and each recoils in horror from the dream fulfillment here transplanted into reality, with the full quantity of repression which separates his infantile state from his present one.

Freud went on to speculate about similar motivations in the case of Shakespeare's Hamlet—not as consciously intended by the author, but as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

stimulated by a real event that the poet's unconscious understood to be in his hero's mind.

Again, I am not going to pursue the validity of the Oedipal theory, whose assumptions have been at the center of many controversies. But I am convinced that this theory could have been formulated only by someone like Freud, and in the Vienna of the turn of the century, in this ambiance of ambivalences. There, sexual promiscuity met up with rigid traditionalism; the display of aristocratic pretensions was simultaneous with strong currents of democratization; the wide array and vivid spectacles of literary and artistic talents were matched by scientific advances in medicine and physics, in economics and technology. These contradictions were crying out for a unifying explanation. Many found it in a variety of socialisms, and it is not accidental that after Freud's *Interpretation of Dreams* attracted followers, many among them were eager to fuse psychoanalysis with Marxism. Freud, however, linked everyone's universalist dreams to his own. But, instead of finding salvation in religion, his modern Everyman would locate it in his own psychic origins.

As we know, and as Freud repeatedly stated, he did not discover the unconscious, the poets had known of it all along. He, however, set out to investigate its origins in relation to the structure of the human mind, and therefore postulated that psychoanalysis was a science. As Schorske maintains, Freud, in his self-analysis, was struggling with the Austrian socio-political reality—as a scientist and Jew, and as a citizen and son. He structured *The Interpretation of Dreams* as a scientific treatise, with each chapter and section systematically presenting an aspect of a dream and its interpretation. Underneath this methodically arranged narrative lies Freud's unconscious self. Via his professional, political and personal struggles, we reach the realm of his instincts—his responses to the indignities of having to wait for a professorship for seventeen years rather than the customary eight, the insecurities caused by the political vulnerability of Jews, and coming to grips with the death of his father. In the process, Freud established that a disguised dream always fulfills a suppressed wish—by means of a few selected dreams. He then elaborated on the importance of infantile experiences—in this case the exhilarating hopes liberalism had held out during his childhood—on later development. In sum, Freud's discovery of psychoanalysis established the centrality of sexuality in every child's early years. And his metaphysical elaborations on the topic, promised more apolitical resolutions for the problems facing all liberals.

So far, I have focused on the Vienna of one hundred years ago. But because psychoanalysis, as we know it, has flourished in the U.S., it behooves me to mention, briefly, the American intellectual soil that would nurture it later on.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As we know, Freud came to America just once, in 1909 to lecture at Clark University. According to Nathan G. Hale, America then was dominated by a "civilized morality" that required women to be prudish and virtuous, sexually reticent and ignorant before marriage, as well as pure in thought. But men as well were expected to observe religious purity, to practice continence, and even marital celibacy. In this environment, physicians diagnosed much neurasthenia but did not know how to deal with it. The neurologist George M. Beard had searched for a cure as early as 1879.

Subsequently, American neurologists such as Morton Prince (1854-1929), James Jackson Putnam (1842-1918), and the physician Smith Eli Jeliffe (1866-1945) were investigating the "French school" of Charcot, Bernheim and Janet, and were practicing suggestion and (occasionally) hypnosis. So were the neurologist Stanley Hall (1844-1924) and the philosopher William James (1842-1910), the nation's first psychologists, and Boris Sidis (1867-1933), a psychopathologist and James's student. Some of them, who constituted the so-called "Boston school," had read about Freud's "miraculous" cures, a few had met him at congresses, but only A.A. Brill had visited Freud in Vienna before his trip to America. They invited him in order to learn about his method, and about the connections between somatic symptoms and sexual repression. His "Introductory Lectures" received wide-spread, even sensationalist, coverage by the press; he forged friendships, especially with James Jackson Putnam; and the analysis of dreams caught the imagination of the larger American public.

However, this enthusiasm was only skin-deep. American physicians had been inclined to look for brain lesions or other pathologies, for deterioration of the cerebral cortex, and for hereditary "mental defects" (especially in new immigrants), and then tended to adopt what they called the "somatic style." Still, the Boston physicians who treated nervous diseases, despite their reputation for prudery, were interested in sexual problems, and did use hypnosis when they deemed it helpful. A few others, such as Charles L. Dana at Cornell Medical College, who had proposed that neurasthenia was a sign of insanity, eventually adopted the somatic style as well. At the same time, the so-called "functional psychiatrists" tended to treat neuroses with rest, diet, electricity, isolation, and suggestion. And fifty to seventy-five percent of cases of hysteria were being diagnosed as hereditary. Altogether, mental illness was on the rise and the physicians didn't know how to deal with it.

Generally, in contrast to Freud, the Americans who would accept psychoanalysis came from Puritan stock and had strong religious beliefs and affiliations. Whereas Putnam, for instance, spoke of a world of "love and hope in it," Freud saw himself as a godforsaken "incredulous Jew." And Putnam's optimism clashed with Freud's increasing pessimism. But they shared a strong sense of ethics.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

America's populist ambiance, however, differed remarkably from its Viennese counterpart. Whereas the new world was exeedingly open, even searching for new ideas to put into practice, the old one was resistant to change. Freud's psychoanalysis, the artistic output by *jung Wien* and by the Secession, at least to some extent, were manifestations of revolts against aristocratic traditions—which the rest of the Viennese either secretly aspired to or visibly spurned. Their innovative achievements, when imported to America, fell on populist eyes and ears: America had no tradition to speak of, and not much discrimination. Thus it is not surprising that when psychoanalysis did arrive in America, and eventually took root, it too was being popularized rather than explored, adapted by mind healers and religious psychotherapists such as the Reverend Elwood Worcester, who founded the Emmanuel movement.

I will not get into how psychoanalysis was received the first time around, in the 1910s and 1920s, or the second time, when after the arrival of the European emigrés in the late 1930s and early 1940s it became established, even entrenched, except to say, that during World War II it was bolstered by the American government—which funded much research that enabled psychoanalysts to study the psychological roots of group behavior, of individual leadership potential, of the psychic mechanisms fueling Hitler's and other enemies' behavior, and of German character structure. In the process, emigré analysts worked with physicians in hopsitals and medical schools, taught many of them about psychoanalysis while, simultanously, being brought around to following ever more closely the more instrumental, scientific methods of American psychiatry.

The psychoanalysts' growing reputation, in turn, brought them to the attention of the media, and of the public. As more people, and especially intellectuals, were being analyzed, as Freudians were being featured by the media and poked fun at in movies, they gained in acceptance. In books by Erich Fromm and Karen Horney, that focused on "the art of loving," "the fear of freedom," and on "the neurotic personality," the growing post-war American middle classes both recognized something of themselves in these portraits, and were unaware of the pain that might ensue when facing true recognition. Psychoanalysis, though rendering many people uneasy, nevertheless was potentially available to everyone. By the time Theodor Reik published *Listening with the Third Ear*, in 1948, the disagreements among Freud's disciples—over issues of meta-philosophical and cultural priorities, candidates' training and clinical practice, and especially over whom to allow into the American and International Asssociations—could not be resolved. Reik, it seems to me, had his third ear cocked also to the culture: he, as well as a few others, decided to initiate non-physicians, thereby siding with Freud and against what soon became known as "the Freudian

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

establishment," and accelerating the competitions of who would be the true descendants of Freud.

In the interim, as Helen Meyers has demonstrated, many so-called official organizations were founded and psychoanalysts made theoretical and clinical leaps. As they kept analyzing and training psychologists and social workers who, too, became practitioners and, in turn, launched others, not only the culture but the theoretical landscape as well was transformed. By now, as Phillip Reiff predicted already in 1966, we are the therapeutic society par excellence. In 1984, there were over two hundred and fifty recognized therapies, and at present there must be at least three hundred and fifty—most of them either referring positively to psychoanalysis or rejecting it. Still, few of their proponents dispute the existence of the unconscious, a concept that the current culture accepts but denied a hundred years ago. Of course, therapists are responding to the malaise induced by a combination of ever accelerating societal demands and individuals' inability to balance these with their actual abilities and aspirations. Yet, despite some of the current criticisms, psychoanalysts' clinical work has moved beyond Freud's original doctrines. Unfortunately, the frequently well taken reproaches have overshadowed these changes, and the psychoanalysts' theories are too technical to be of general interest.

At national and international meetings, on the other hand, psychoanalysts are likely to get involved in organizational politics. These more or less determine whose theoretical and clinical papers will be presented—which means that even when their contents are not endorsed they at least will be debated. And personal likes and dislikes as well as institutional affiliations enter into these decisions.

Over the years, therapists' concerns and practices have been disseminated, commented on, and debated in the media. This has induced an ever wider gap between those who do therapy and those who defend specific theses about Freud's and his disciples' personalities, their suppositions and speculations, the meaning of the interactions among them, their correspondences, and the impact of all these matters on later generations of Freudians, on academics, and on the culture. Criticism of Freud comes from a variety of disciplinary perspectives. They now reinterpret Freud's dreams, speculate on the motives for his views, and dispute whether psychoanalysis is an art or a science. All of the "Freud studies" gain in currency when we are reminded that Freud's dreams and fantasies are central to *The Interpretation of Dreams*. Moreover, opponents' own fantasies and speculations are being justified when bolstered by recently constructed social and psychological theories—structuralism, deconstruction and postmodernism—and by newly available letters and memoirs.

The ensuing brouhaha in the media about the fate of psychoanalysis is magnified by the many counter-therapies that compete with more classical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

treatments by the descendants of Freud. For whatever reasons, psychoanalysts—whether M.D.s or psychologists—attract fewer and fewer patients; psychiatrists increasingly are using mind altering drugs; the culture is moving toward simpler and simpler interventions and tends to be unaware that true psychological insight does not come about without effort. All of these currents came together in the controversies around the upcoming Freud exhibit at the Library of Congress. Freudian analysts and a number of historians planned a tribute to Freud; some vociferous and dissident Freud scholars soon accused them of wanting to resurrect their dwindling influence; psychologists who only recently were accepted by the so-called establishment joined them to get even for previous slights; European analysts accused all these nay-sayers of "politically correct" thought control; the dissidents protested officially and unofficially keep pressuring; and the media once again has a field day.

Altogether, I believe, these circumstances only help to confirm the fact that Freud's dreams of one hundred years ago have taken root, that some of his basic motivations are our motivations as well, and that we each have our own dreams and fantasies. So, even if our unconscious demons appear in different representations and shapes, they must be tamed in relation to new possibilities, and current contingencies.

Morris Eagle: Thank you, Edith. I am pleased to introduce the next speaker, Leon Cooper. He is the Thomas Watson Professor of Science and founder and director of the Institute for Brain and Neural Systems at Brown University. He also shared the Nobel prize in physics for his studies on the theories of subject conductivity. Dr. Cooper's topic is "Shall We Deconstruct Science?"

Leon Cooper: As a scientist (a hard scientist with a soft heart) before this audience, I believe it is appropriate to quote a remark of Ed Bloom, a departed colleague. Once, when addressing the Modern Language Association, Ed said he felt like a lion thrown to the Christians.

I was very much influenced by Freud's writings on psychoanalysis, particularly by his theory of dreams. I didn't believe all of Freud's elaborations, but I thought he touched on concepts that were enormously deep, such as the unconscious, the conscious, and the very powerful interaction between them. It is of great interest to me since biologists and neurophysiologists expect to find the underlying physical correlate for such concepts as the unconscious. For example, we might say that the unconscious is like stored memory and what is conscious is memory in play.

I seem to remember that Freud believed we would eventually find the biological basis for psychoanalytic concepts. But at the beginning of the century that time had not arrived. So the best way was to proceed without

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

such a basis. He was right. One of the things a scientist learns is that there is a right time to ask a question. Newton did very well in his analysis of the motion of the planets but failed completely in his attempts at chemistry or the nature of matter, because their time had not yet arrived.

My own feeling is that within the next ten to twenty years we will uncover the biological basis of learning and memory storage. We will know precisely what happens in a cell or at the cell surface, which receptors change, what alterations take place, what cellular changes occur with learning, what chemical changes take place, where memories are stored, what the differences are between short-term and long-term memory, and what determines whether or not transfers are made between short and long-term memory. I believe that it is just a matter of time before we understand how the brain processes information.

A question we might ask is whether we will be able to construct all of the so-called mental states from these material entities. Whether we will be able to construct such things as our awareness of ourselves, our consciousness. I recall Santayana writing (*Dialogues in Limbo*, I believe): "all of our sorrow is real, but the atoms of which we are made are indifferent." The scientific question might perhaps be phrased: Can we construct real sorrow from indifferent atoms? This is no doubt difficult, but not necessarily insoluble.

I'm not willing to indulge in the kinds of mystification one so often hears—the almost invariable accompaniment to the players who attempt difficult scientific questions. There is a common sequence. First try to solve the problem. After the first few failures throw up your hands and say it is insoluble or that a new law of nature is involved. In this case pour intelligence and consciousness into the material machine. We don't know before a problem is solved whether or not it is soluble, but historically people have thrown up their hands very quickly. Let me give you an example. In the ninteenth century, the French positivist Auguste Comte said that an example of knowledge permanently inaccessible to the human mind is the chemical composition of the stars. He likely reasoned that in order to determine the chemistry of the stars you have to go there, take a piece of one and put it in a test tube, etc. That was just a couple of years before spectroscopy was invented. Then it was realized that by analyzing the light that came from the stars you could know more about the chemistry of the stars than we do of the interior of the earth. What it really means when people say that things are insoluble is that they haven't seen the links: the links don't yet exist. But links are what we construct all of the time. It could turn out that some problems are insoluble, but I'm reluctant to jump to that conclusion.

At the turn of every century we seem to be afflicted with fin de siècle malaise; call it "sixth decimal place-itis." You all recall the famous statement

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

made at the end of the ninteenth century that all that's left in physics is filling in the sixth decimal place—just a few years before we had relativity, quantum theory, and so on. At the end of the twentieth century there are authors writing that history has come to an end, that science has come to an end. All that is left is ironic science, whatever that is; that the kind of questions we deal with today can never be experimentally verified. From the point of view of a working scientist nothing could be more absurd. We all think that the questions we are working on can be verified, that we will verify them and will solve the problems just as our predecessors solved theirs. In fact, I remember when I was a mere youth at the Institute for Advanced Study, all the young guys would sit around saying Heisenberg, Schrödinger, Einstein—they solved all the easy problems and left us with the hard ones. In the last twenty or thirty years most of the things that we considered hard problems have been solved, in many cases by us. I'm sure young people sit around now saying we solved all the easy problems, leaving them the hard ones. Of course, once you know the solution, the problem looks a lot easier than it did before.

I tend to be optimistic. I think science plugs along, does its thing, and gets results. Somehow, because scientists like me perhaps are down-to-earth, cheerful, and optimistic, and believe, deep down, that there really are no questions we can't answer, we have become the subject of intense attacks. Perhaps it is science envy. Perhaps it's indigestion. But I find some of the words I read hard to believe. As though they came from another planet. Still, I find that people rarely say things face to face that are quite as shocking as what they print. And often, there is a point to the criticism. Turning Voltaire upside down, I tend to sometimes agree with what is said, and disagree with the way it's being said. Let me address some of these concerns about science.

You've all heard of the famous "scientific method," maybe have even written about it. I've done science all of my life and don't have a totally clear idea what this method is. A real scientist, I would say, could be compared to Sherlock Holmes: he has a good nose for where to go, and sufficient technique to get him there. I've known scientists with remarkable technique who always seem to be pointed in the wrong direction, others with rather minimal technique who always seem to be going in the right way. We come in all varieties. Think of Sherlock Holmes again. He refuses to speculate because he doesn't have enough data; but when he has the data he produces the miracle—he ties everything together. To characterize science in a few words, one could say that our job is to get the facts (as problematic as they are) to distinguish the world that is, from all the ways it might be—from the world of our fantasies, from all other logical possibilities, to determine which world we are actually living in. Then, (and of course we are aware that facts interact with theories) introduce a theory, a structure that ties everything together.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The theoretical structures we have produced (allow me to wax romantic) are the intellectual cathedrals of the twentieth century, arches from the origin of the universe to the properties of matter, from coldest to hottest, calculations that yield the amount of magnetism on an electron to ten decimal places. It is a terrible pity that so few people understand and appreciate what is there. The idea that it is too hard (all that mathematics) is absurd. It is not any harder than learning a second language. We must distinguish between the talent and virtuosity required to create science, and the ability to be led through it, to appreciate what is there. We can watch a tennis match and understand what is going on, but we can't get on the court with Pete Sampras. It does take special talent to create science, it's true, but it's not difficult to understand it. That holds true for all the science I know, including the most esoteric aspects of the quantum theory.

We may also have heard (I'm shocked) that scientists don't always follow the scientific method. Scientists are influenced by a current point of view, so that what they are doing is relative, therefore no better than other ways of knowing. I classify this, in my own unscholarly way, as a school of thought that says everything is as good as everything else—total absurdity. Because something is not the best or the worst does not mean that a distinction cannot be made. Life consists of choosing between things that are a little bit better and a little worse; that there are no distinctions because there is no absolute truth and no absolute falsehood is like saying that the most magnificent lines written by Shakespeare are equivalent to anything that comes out of anyone's mouth.

But I do agree that there is a point of view in science. It is important to teach science in a historic context, because the questions people ask are not really comprehensible unless you understand what they believed at the time. Let me give you an example. You may have heard of the Michaelson-Morley Experiment. This was done toward the end of the ninteenth century by the famous American physicists Albert Michaelson and Edward Morley. The results of this experiment were startling to physicists and finally led to a complete revolution in our concepts of space and time. (It led to Einstein's special theory of relativity although, as one of history's ironies, it might be that Einstein was not aware of this experiment in 1905.) What was this experiment? They thought of the sun and earth in the universe and asked what was the motion of the earth with respect to the universe. Michaelson's genius was, in part, to have the techniques to measure the earth's motion with respect to the universe. When he and Morley made the measurements they found, to put it most simply, that the earth was standing still, that the earth's motion with respect to the universe was zero. They were dissatisfied because they wanted to get a number.

But the result was unambiguous. Even though the earth is moving in its orbit about the sun at about eighteen miles a second no matter when

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

during the year they measured, the result they found over and over was that the earth seemed to be standing still. Many proposals were made to explain this result. But as far as I know, no one ever proposed that the earth was, in fact, standing still (at the center of the universe?).

Now imagine that the Michaelson-Morley experiment had been done before Copernicus. Everyone would have said, why did you waste your time? We all know that the earth stands still at the center of the universe. But at the end of the ninteenth century that was the one thing no one was willing to say. Why not? Because the whole context had changed. Scientists shared a different point of view.

Of course scientists are influenced by what other people believe and by their times. The underlying meaning of a scientific theory can change quite radically from one century to another. When people say that science is not objective but subjective, they do not appreciate that very few scientists worry about underlying meaning in the first place, and when they do so, they generally don't do it very well. This is not their daily concern. Science is a craft in which internal structures are built—as the structure of a cathedral. It is astonishing that between the nineteenth and twentieth century that cathedral has been picked up and moved from one place to another. It sits on other foundations, there is another view of nature; but the internal structural relations are essentially the same. And it is these internal structural relations that are the real content of science, and they remain essentially invariant from Newton to Einstein to the quantum theory and no doubt will remain the same in theories that will emerge in the future.

Let's talk a bit now about Alan Sokal, who submitted a paper to *Social Text* called "Transgressing the Boundaries: Transformative Hermeneutics of Quantum Gravity." If the title doesn't make you laugh, what follows surely will. After the editors of this magazine published it, they claimed they were deceived. Stanley Fish wrote that Sokal was undermining the trust of one person in another. Perhaps he did to a certain extent. But what is going on if the editors of a magazine can't tell the difference between something that is patently a hoax and something that is real? If someone sends me a scientific paper in a field with which I am familiar, even if I don't understand everything that is written I would hope to be able to determine whether or not it was a hoax. If nothing follows from anything else, I would send it back and ask for clarification. In an electronic posting on the internet Bruce Robbins and Andrew Ross, the editors, were furious, and stated:

> Why does science matter so much to us? Because its power is a civil religion, has a social political authority that affects our daily lives, and the powerless condition of the natural world more than does any

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> other domain of knowledge. Does it follow that non-scientists should have some say in the decision making prophecies that define and shape the work of the professional scientific community? Should non-experts have anything to say about scientific methodology and epistemology? After centuries of scientific racism, scientific sexism, and scientific domination of nature one might have thought that this was a pertinent question to ask.

I freely admit that science does have a point of view, but not that our point of view is racist, sexist, or dominates nature—it dominates our thinking about nature, but nature is what dominates our structures. However, there is an issue: science is powerful and affects our lives; an important question is whether non-scientists should have anything to say about science. That is an interesting and legitimate question to which I would like to propose an answer. When it comes to the methodology, when it comes to the way science is conducted, clearly it is scientists, the experts who have to decide. To say that non-experts should decide is like saying that a passenger on a plane should be asked for his opinion on what the pilot should do when in a difficult situation. Pilots may make wrong decisions, but even if they don't always do it right, they have the best chance.

But where values are involved, when the issue is the way science affects society, there are situations that should not be decided by the experts. They must involve everyone. Here we get into really serious problems. People feel so frightened and left out because they often are excluded from the decisions that affect their own lives by experts who say "you just don't know enough." I think that is too bad. To know enough to be able to assess the risks and to make an intelligent decision about many of the questions that are asked is not as difficult as is believed.

Consider the recent bruhaha about electric lines and spending billions of dollars to move them, etc. Some of the discussion reflects what can best be described as bleak ignorance. It really doesn't take more than a week to learn enough electromagnetic theory to comprehend why those of us who understand it believe that the supposed adverse effects are not there. Of course anything is possible. But do we want to protect against hypothetical possibilities for which we have no evidence whatsoever? We have to assess risks. And it's not all that hard to obtain knowledge so that we can all participate in decisions. I think non-experts must be involved in these decisions. I think it is possible for non-scientists to learn what they need to know about science. Science departments (with some outstanding exceptions) have probably not been as responsive as they should. But it can, it must be done. In this world ignorance of science is as much a handicap as illiteracy. What is required is not "science studies." What we need, instead, is that all of us study more science.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Morris Eagle: Thank you, Dr. Cooper. I must step out of my role as moderator and express my personal appreciation for the point of view you expressed. You may take it for granted, but at times it seems like a rational cry in the wilderness. Our next step will be discussion among the panelists and then we'll take questions from the audience.

Helen Meyers: I am so happy that Dr. Cooper likes to talk to non-scientists as well. That means he is willing to talk to me, and I'd love to talk to him further. There are, of course, those who would consider it a little questionable that you don't consider analysis a science, obviously you differentiate the physical science as true science from the social sciences which are real?

Leon Cooper: I didn't mean that psychoanalysis wasn't a science.

Helen Meyers: In terms of various definitions of internal consistencies, we talk about certain basics that remain the same. (Ricoeur?) I have a little trouble with the notion that there are "facts" and that "a fact is a fact." You know perfectly well, and I think you pointed it out, that facts change depending on the observer and on the way they are perceived. Perception is influenced not only by expectations and cultures but by each individual's colored glasses, so to speak. As you have pointed out, facts become very different in relation to new ideas and new ways of looking at things. So I don't know what a fact is. I am dealing here with a current controversial concept in psychoanalysis by moving from such notions as objective fact, objective observer, historical truth, the finding of truth, reality, external reality, toward subjectivism. In a way this moves away from all fact. The whole idea of the original notion that the objective observer, that is the analyst, could tell what is true and what was the best solution and that he or she could tell this to the patient is now kind of anathema to psychoanalytic thinking. While you are absolutely right that Freud started out with the notion and hope that eventually we would find the physiological and ideological somatic basis for everything psychological, that doesn't necessarily make it true or desirable. Freud came from a physical science background, he was a neurologist, it was very important to him that he adhere to the physical sciences. I agree that you are going to find common neurological, biological pathways for everything in the body. However, this will not explain what goes on psychologically. Without question there is a somatic organic pathway and we're going to find out more about this, but it will not explain the transition from this chemical pathway to the psychological, internal interpretation or vice versa. That's where the big leap comes in and we don't know the answer. "There are more things between heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy." I may even be a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

bit of a romantic and believe in something beyond the concrete, something like a soul that is very different from the soma. Indeed, in German, Freud's word for psyche was soul (*Seele*). Therefore how you relate the physical to the psychological is still a big question and that is a kind of a problem. I also agree that we are going to get answers to everything, but the answers are going to change all the time. That doesn't make them any less useful, because for the time being they're the best possible explanation, but it does not make them more truthful, just more useful.

By the way, I share with you your optimism about the physical sciences and psychoanalysis. I do not agree at all with the current notion that psychoanalysis is dead. It is active and very much alive.

I won't rediscuss the subjectivism of intersubjective issues at length at this point, except to reiterate that there is a big trend toward the notion that psychoanalysis is not a one-person objective observer system, but a two-person system with two subjective entities enacting the process; and even though these persons are not equal partners, it is suggested that this intersubjective process creates a new narrative between the two participants in the dialogue, a new narrative truth that is extraordinarily meaningful and useful, but has little to to with objective historical truth and facts.

Leon Cooper: I really don't disagree with you, but I'd like to elaborate a little bit. That is, after all, what professors do. Do facts exist? An old and deep philosophical question, "Does the external world exist?" gets us right back to Bishop Berkley, even Plato. My own view is that, of course, our perpections of the world are influenced by our own state of mind. One of my colleagues once said, "People say that seeing is believing, but in fact in many cases you have to believe in order to see." That's perfectly true, but to paraphrase Orwell, all facts are equal but some are more equal than others. For example, if you shine sunlight through a spectroscope and look at it carefully you will see certain dark lines. These are the famous Fraunhofer lines and, as far as I know, almost all people who look will agree that the lines are there. They will be there in specific places whether the observers are sad or not sad, etc. I think we can agree that events do exist that most people more or less agree on, even though they may influence them in very different ways. When we construct a theory of knowledge the question might be,"assuming that there is an external world, how can we organize it with a mind that's so imperfect?" I know there is a problem, but I think generally we can distinguish "facts" from our feelings about them.

Another issue. You stated that there might be physiological bases for various mental states, the various concepts of analysis, but you weren't sure if there would be any use to get them; I have the feeling that you don't even like the idea. But whether we like it or not, we'll very likely find that what we call "soul" is some configuration of material objects. I'm not saying

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I particularly like it or dislike it, but we might as well face the fact that it is probably that way.

One thing you said that I agree with completely: one will not have a theory and understanding of mental states until one can construct mental states from material objects in such a way that the construction displays all the properties of the mental state. We have done it before: we have constructed such things as temperature from the motion of molecules; we have constructed light from electricity and magnetism. That's the business we're in; if we can do it, it will have to satisfy the criteria that you set. We don't know yet whether we can do it—Let us just see.

Edith Kurzweil: I just want to clarify something. I don't think there is as much disagreement between the two of you as you think. What Alan Sokal was doing was to send a pseudo-scientific text to a journal which comes under the rubric of post-modernism. But post-modern texts deal with theories that are derived from texts, including texts by scientists and by psychoanalysts rather then with the content of your research. What's more, post-modernists perceive things in relation to other things. Thus they are entitled to choose texts that appeal to them, and to free-associate from one text to another one and then come up with a Theory. This practice, which was vaguely derived from Lacan's reading of Freud, became fashionable in English departments, and then expanded into sociology, anthropology, and most other disciplines. So we are really dealing with a phenomenon existing in universities. It does not exist for psychoanalysts, but those of us working in a university obviously are exposed to it.

Morris Eagle: Before opening the discussion I want to make a couple of quick comments. I am reminded of an article by Marianne von Eckardt, who is a philosopher of science and the daughter of Karen Horney. She makes the very simple and sensible point, that many people are fond of talking about the theory-saturated nature of facts. That, in fact, may be true to a certain extent. However, she makes the simple point that what scientists try to do is to erect safeguards against such realities. The alternative, of course, is to wallow in it. I think that's an important distinction one can make. What one perceives as fact can change with values, biases, and so on, but the way I understand science, which is defined not by content but by attitude and method, is to simply recognize that this exists and do the best one can to account for it rather than make a virtue or a religion out of it—which leads one to claim that no facts are possible, etc. Now, to the audience.

Steven Goldberg: I should apologize that I came in so late and only heard the last part of Dr. Cooper's talk. I was in a laboratory helping my chemistry students observe facts.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I belive Sokal does physics a great service. But I think that you were perhaps a little too harsh on the editors of the journal, with which I am not terribly familiar. I hope that they will learn a lesson about dealing with things they really know nothing about and are not in a position to evaluate. The reason I say you are a little too harsh is due to an article about fraudulent leukemia research, which was presumably submitted to qualified referees. At least five articles had to be retracted. As a chemist, I believe in the scientific method, and in peer review. But I think we sometimes do ourselves a disservice when we don't admit the human fallibilities that are associated with it.

Leon Cooper: I agree with you, scientists are human beings. When I was a teenager, my mother read an article in *The New York Times* in which some scientist was caught in an embarrassing position; she told me it shocked her. Teenage wise-guy that I was, I said, "so what, everybody does it," and she said, "but he is a *scientist*."

It doesn't seem especially surprising to me that scientists lie, steal, and cheat the way everybody else does. And before you all, I declare myself against lying, stealing, and cheating.

But what should we do if a scientist falsifies data. I can assure you none of us in the game like that, because it can waste time and drive us crazy. The question is how to deal with it. The worst thing to do is to bring in lawyers and the FBI. The best thing to do is just to repeat the experiment, that's all. Just do it over again. Fraud is not the problem. We have to decide in every article we read whether the experimenter is reporting exactly what he saw or what he thought he saw, or what he believed he ought to have seen. We worry about that all the time. Of course, if someone deliberately falsifies, that can be aggravating. But it happens rarely and it is self-correcting. If a scientist reports experiments that no one else can repeat, very soon his reputation sinks below that of fraud—to incompetence.

Gunther Stent: The issue of fraud did not arise in the Sokal case mentioned here earlier. The manuscript submitted by Sokal was a spoof whose absurdity the editor should have noticed, if he had been a serious scholar. But the issue of fraud did arise in the Baltimore case because it was alleged that his co-author, Imanishi-Kari, had not observed the experimental data they published. The case against Imanishi-Kari was eventually dismissed, not because her data were vindicated but because on review the evidence for fraud was found to be insufficient.

Leon Cooper: I agree with you, as is said in Scottish courts: not proven. Suppose, Gunther, I claim that you committed fraud in one of the experiments you did twenty-five years ago. The only conclusion one could come

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to is "not proven." You could not prove that you didn't commit fraud, nor could I prove that you did.

Gunther Stent: Yes, that's why the application of criminal jurisprudence to scientific fraud is highly problematic. For a verdict of "guilty," proof of fraudulent intent is required, in addition to false data. This proof is very difficult to provide in cases of scientific fraud because of the wild cards of sloppiness or so-called "honest errors."

Alfred Pfabigan: This is in response to Professor Kurzweil's paper. She spoke about cultural influences on psychoanalysis. In this context, I think we should rank literature and philosophy higher, as a source of psychoanalytical thinking. I am not so sure if it really broke with traditions as Dr. Meyers said. To cite a classic example, the relation between Freud's ideas and those of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche have been under discussion since 1905. There are many analogies; for instance, the idea that reason and ego are not the masters of the house, that there is a broad unconscious field. Nietzsche describes what Freud later called defense and repression. A monograph on Freud and Nietzsche by German philosopher Monika Kaiser El-Safti is titled "Der Nachdenker," which translates as "the overthinker," and also the "after-thinker."

Freud himself reacted strangely in the discussion about Nietzsche's influence on psychoanalysis. He said he hadn't read Nietzsche, did not have the time to read him. We know now he was a member of the "Leseverein deutscher Studenten," an organization inspired by Nietzsche's ideas. Freud's friend, Joseph Panetch, visited Nietzsche. So we don't believe Freud, and I think that there is a pool of ideas in literature and philosophy which came before clinical experience.

Edith Kurzweil: Freud himself said that he was not the one who invented the unconscious. He said that the poets who came before him knew about it. I don't think it was the kind of break that you seem to think I meant. What I argued was that Freud was the first to investigate the unconscious in a scientific sort of way.

Helen Meyers: I was just going to agree with both Edith and you. I have nothing new under the sun along those lines. Obviously everything is in the air. When you talk about new ideas, even new theories in psychoanalysis in other countries, the same new theories always seem to come up more or less at the same time in different places, apparently from nowhere. Actually, the different strands are there; and I don't think Freud claimed that he invented something new. What he did do is put things together in a particular way, and maybe to stress and underline it, which as a whole then was a new

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

creation. No question that the many different strands of this knowledge were there. Freud borrowed a great many things from many people. So do all composers and artists and scientists, and even I. We all borrow. The greatest compliment is borrowing from somebody else and not even acknowledging it, because it's so bright, so meaningful, and so deep within you that it is very close to truth. I think it's somewhat unnecessary to worry whether he did or did not invent certain things. But it is important to realize that he put it together differently than Nietzsche, or anyone else. I certainly would rather be a follower of Freud than of Nietzsche.

Leon Cooper: We are often in that situation. No matter what ideas or themes we propose, there is always someone who says you could find something similar in a footnote here or there. There are always predecessors, ideas already in the air. If you were to take an extreme point of view, nothing new could ever happen. Certainly the world is different since Freud, so he must have done something. It is what scientists do, putting things together that makes a difference in the world.

Robert Wistrich: I agree with the last point. Certainly whatever the borrowings, and Freud made many, it is quite clear that psychoanalysis as he defined it did not have any single predecessor. I disagree that there is such a strong Nietzschean influence on Freud. I think Freud is in many ways anti-Nietzschean, especially when you look at the kind of perspectivist and irrational elements in Nietzsche's teachings. I think that these features are fundamentally different from Freud and therefore, whether or not he was influenced by this or that particular strand in Nietzscheanism, it is quite understandable that he would not want to claim that ancestry. However, my question to Edith would be, if we could bring Freud back to life on this platform and ask him whether his expectations with regard to psychoanalysis have been fulfilled, what would he say? Has the adoption of Freudian ideas, whether in America or elsewhere, been a fulfillment or perhaps a betrayal of his ideas?

Helen Meyers: I have a tape recording of him at the end of his life, where he talks about what he hopes psychoanalysis would do and what he feels it has done. He was very unhappy. It fell far short of what he had expected and hoped from it. I believe he would be happier now with the burgeoning of so many new ideas in psychoanalysis—Freud loved ideas—and with all the interest in psychoanalysis, like this panel. He would have been, however, I think deeply hurt by some of the misinterpretations of his work and motives.

Robert Wistrich: But the question is *what* precisely would have disappointed him. This is after all 1996, and a lot has happened since his death. So the answer cannot be so simple.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

I have another question, with regard to science. I would like to know whether you think that science should be or is in fact value-free, particularly concerning questions of morality and of choices that have to be made which affect millions of people. In this century we have seen that scientists, willingly or unwillingly, have lent their hands to decisions that have had frightful implications, that have led to mass destruction, from two world wars to the threat of thermonuclear weapons. It's not a question of blaming science, but of asking what is the responsibility of scientists, and whether any code of human values is applicable here or not? What is the relationship between science, ethics and politics? Is there anything in science itself that can contribute to elucidating that issue?

Edith Kurzweil: On the one hand, I would say, globally, that psychoanalysis has changed the culture. Certainly, Freud could not expect that so much of it would filter down in one form or another. On the other hand, psychoanalysis itself has changed as a result of its broad acceptance and proliferation. Diagnoses are changing, there are defenses against psychoanalysis which have evolved all along. Freud would not be satisfied, I believe, because psychoanalysis is not really able to fulfill wishes for permanent cures. But it's hard to tell how many people are living better lives as a result of having been analyzed, or how much worse they might be off if they hadn't had therapeutic treatment.

Leon Cooper: Scientists are not value free. Many of us would hesitate to work on harmful or destructive applications. But the context is important. In a wartime situation (World War II for example) when it was feared that the Germans might be ahead of us in the construction of a nuclear bomb, we worked frantically to deny Hitler the possibility of threatening us with this new weapon before we had it ourselves. When it comes to fundamental research, we scientists are no better than others at foreseeing the consequences of what we do. We don't have a crystal ball.

We are occasionally presented with a romantic image of the scientist (Dürrenmat or Hollywood) on the verge of the momentous discovery that can lead to limitless evil who says no—I will not go on. Perhaps Oppenheimer encouraged that image. But mostly scientists grope along with no clear indication of what the consequences will be. I see no directive within science that can guide us. We, as citizens and humans, must decide.

I agree with you that we would be better off sharply limiting the number of nuclear weapons right now, but nuclear weapons were created under the pressure of World War II and were made possible by scientific advances that date all the way back to the beginning of the century when most scientists wouldn't have dreamed that nuclear weapons would be possible. In

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fact, Rutherford once said the idea that you can get energy from the nucleus is moonshine, and he was one of the greatest experimental nuclear physicists who ever lived.

Speaker: Do you believe that when one takes a scientific view of human affairs, when one studies it in a dependable, reliable, more or less objective way, that this *ipso facto* precludes room for morality, freedom of choice, personal responsibility, individual accountability . . .

Leon Cooper: Absolutely not. This is a bit like asking whether a detailed, chemical knowledge of what happens when we share a bottle of Lafite Rothschild is going to change our appreciation of that great wine. One has nothing to do with the other. I would love to have a thorough understanding of everything, but I don't expect that to change my appreciation of my own experience. I don't believe that anything we learn about ourselves will relieve us of personal responsibility and accountability. Of course, you could cite extremes in which a person cannot function or make choices. But for most of us choices are possible. I don't believe anything we learn will change that.

Morris Eagle: Unfortunately, our time is up. Thank you all.

Session III: History Then and Now

Edith Kurzweil: The two speakers at this session, Walter Laqueur and Robert Wistrich, hardly need any introduction. We will first hear from Walter Laqueur, who is Chairman of the International Research Council at CSIS. He will be speaking on "Fin de siècle Terrorism."

Walter Laqueur: I shall limit myself to a few observations about violence at the end of the century. I mean violence as a motive in the work of writers, painters and composers on one hand, and terrorist violence on the other. Apocalyptic moods and thoughts have appeared fairly regularly throughout history and can be detected without much difficulty at the present time. I am aware that fin de siècle is not necessarily a synonym for apocalyptic moods, and even among believers in the apocalypse we find considerable differences, for instance between optimists and pessimists. The optimists believe that a new and better world will emerge from the ruins of the old world; the pessimists do not share this belief. The tradition of the cheerful apocalyptics reaches from the Revelation of St. John by way of Karl Marx to Aquarius and the New Age. Among the best-known

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nihilist apocalyptics are Bakunin and Nietzsche, not because Nietzsche favored nihilism but because he did not believe in progress.

One should think that most or all of the terrorists of the late ninteenth and twentieth century belong to the optimistic tradition. If not, why bother killing enemies and creating havoc if the future will not be better than the past and the present? Terrorists have a political agenda and it stands to reason that people in utter despair will have no such agenda, be it the demand for a state of their own or greater social justice. However, there has always been a suicidal element in terrorism and it apparently becomes more marked towards the end of a century. I do not mean religious fanatics who believe in an afterlife in paradise where the houris will attend to them, but to secular terrorists with no such hopes. This suicidal element can be found among the anarchists of the 1890s and the Russian terrorists of the following decade. It appears among the German right-wing militants in the years following World War I, among the hunger strikers of the IRA, among the Turkish militants, Japanese and Tamil Tiger terrorists. Most strikingly it appeared among the Baader-Meinhof group, the Red Army Faction, and their collective suicide at Stammheim.

I have a few examples mainly drawn from Russia and Germany; a great deal has been written about England and France, and as far as the U.S. is concerned there was no pronounced fin de siècle, an interesting issue that remains to be investigated. I shall start with the issue of imminent war. There was an enormous amount of literature on this subject, the most prophetic books were those by H. G. Wells. However, at a lower level of sophistication there were thrillers and political science fiction preoccupied with an attack by one country on another. The British were afraid that a continental power would dig a tunnel and thus overwhelm Britain; up to about 1903 the main bogey man was France, which was later replaced by Germany. However, most authors were patriots and their fear was not so much of destruction (unlike H.G. Wells, their technical imagination was limited), but of foreign rule. If we move on from Britain to France there was less prophesying about war even though the militant right dreamed of revenge for 1870-71. The vague feeling of impending catastrophe was probably most pronounced in Germany and Russia. I have noted elsewhere that these forebodings were limited in the main to the avant-garde. Middle and low-brow culture, was, on the whole, optimistic and believed in progress. One could go further and argue that even the avant-garde did not really believe in disaster, that it thought in terms of a spiritual cataclysm rather than physical destruction. However, not all the evidence points in this direction, certainly not in the field of plastic arts. The visions of war were by no means limited to modernists such as Kubin (1900). I could think of at least two well-known pictures by major painters of the period who were anything but revolutionaries; one by Franz von Stuck

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

(1894), who personified tradition, the other by Boecklin (1896 and after)—both called "Der Krieg." They were frightening, particularly Boecklin's picture, but it was more a matter of allegory than of impending disaster. Even Stefan George's writings about the "many who would be massacred by the holy madness, the holy pestilence and the holy war" spoke of tens of thousands (*Der Stern des Bundes* 1913-14), rather than millions.

The decadents were not much preoccupied with public affairs but rather the pleasures or the pains of the flesh, especially their own flesh, but it has been frequently noted that the distance to political activism and especially extremely aggressive nationalism was not that far. The famous examples are Maurice Barrès and, more strikingly d'Annunzio, "the child of pleasure" (the title of d'Annunzio's first major novel) became a *condottiere* and a national hero occupying Fiume, and holding it for fifteen months against the expressed wish of the leading statesmen of the world assembled in Versailles at the end of World War I.

This phenomenon was by no means limited to the far right, for it can be found with equal ease on the extreme left. A famous example is Johannes R. Becher who began his career in the years before the first World War as perhaps the most extreme singer of everything chaotic, ecstatic and apocalyptic among the German expressionists and ended up as a minister of culture in the East German government after World War II. There was no more ardent Stalinist, not just in politics but also in his cultural view than this erstwhile decadent poet.

There is an apparent contradiction, or at least an incongruence, between the views of the decadents and the exercise of violence. It is difficult to imagine Oscar Wilde and his friends throwing bombs and it is of course true that the apocalyptic mood, "die Lust am Untergang," was not permanent and all-pervasive. But there seems to have been a common denominator, namely boredom, a general disgust with life.

I shall try to show what I mean by referring to two literary works which appeared about one hundred years ago. They were very widely read at the time, and are totally forgotten now. Boris Savinkov (alias Ropshin) was one of the leaders of the Russian Social Revolutionaries, or to be precise, of their military arm, the B.O. At the time of the March revolution of 1917 he became a deputy minister of war, an aide to Kerensky. In 1925 he returned illegally from Paris to the Soviet Union, was caught and executed. He was a very well-known figure at the time; Winston Churchill included him as one of his "famous contemporaries."

Savinkov-Ropshin published in 1909 his *Diary Of A Terrorist* in which he describes the assassination of Plehwe and other leading Russian establishment figures of the day. What also emerges from this book is the strongly religious motivation of the terrorists. A fair number of them were

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

practicing Orthodox Christians, and they regarded themselves as martyrs. This was true with regard to Kalyayev, one of his friends and co-fighters (about whom Camus wrote a famous play) as well as many others.

They were highly moral terrorists who knew that to kill was a mortal sin and that sooner or later they would have to pay with their own lives for having sinned. But this was not the only motivation. Savinkov wrote another book in 1909, *The Pale Horse*, the title and the motto of which are taken from the Revelation of St. John. The book was widely interpreted as a break with terrorism and even betrayal of the progressive cause. The hero (Savinkov) suffers from general, free-floating nausea. He writes in his diary: "I do not want to live anymore. My own words bore me, my thoughts and desires. People and their lives bore me. What should one believe? I do not want the prayers of slaves. Let Christus's word lighten the world. I do not love. I am alone." And so on. All this is a fairly succinct and typical reflection of the malaise at the turn of the century. It did not induce Savinkov to commit suicide, even though his return to the Soviet Union later on could be interpreted as a suicidal act. It did not prevent him from behaving like a Russian patriot when war broke out in 1914, just as Barrès and d'Annunzio became superpatriots.

The Russian terrorists believed in certain ideals. To call them nihilists as some misguided foreigners still did at the time (following Turgenev's famous novel) was utterly misleading. They were ardent, deep believers, perhaps the only ones in Europe to take ideas so seriously at the time. There were also nihilist terrorists who appear in a novel by Stanislaw Przybyszewski first published in 1899. Przybyszewski, a Pole by origin, lived in Germany at the time and wrote his novel *Satanskinder* (Children of Satan) in German. He later returned to Poland and his subsequent books were written in his native language. The children of Satan believe in nothing except destruction for its own sake. They are a small group headed by a young man named Gordon; other members are the sickly Wronski, Ostap (who hangs himself), Okanek (a criminal), and Boiko (a professional revolutionary). Their slogan is to destroy for destruction's sake. They burn the municipality and the only factory in town and expropriate the local bank. What would be the greatest fortune? Gordon asks: "To destroy more cities, the country, the whole world." *Satanskinder* was a great *succès de scandale*. Were there such people or were they a product of the imagination of the author, such as Dostoyevsky's villains were? It is doubtful whether Przybyszewski had met any terrorists in the flesh. These villains had nothing in common with the Russian terrorists of the B.O., nor with the French or Italian anarchists who wanted not to destroy the world but to build a more just social order. The Irish Invincibles and the South Slav conspirators wanted freedom for their peoples, but not to see their countries in ruins.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

There were also prophets of destruction, claiming that "die Lust der Zerstörung ist eine schöpferische Lust" (Bakunin), even though most of them never practiced what they preached. There were individuals and small groups at the margins of society, embittered, half or totally crazy, because of personal misfortunes or because they were genuinely convinced that the world had become so sinful that it ought to be destroyed. These loners did not publish newspapers. They did not widely broadcast their views nor did they proselytize, for they had no wish to establish a political movement. But their power was limited: "Satan's children" could burn a factory or a municipal building or rob a bank, but there was no possible way they could burn or dynamite a hundred or a thousand. In brief, given the technical possibilities of the time, their capabilities were very limited. The first novels envisaging atomic bombs were, I believe, George Griffith's *The Lord of Labor* (1911) and H.G. Wells's *The World Set Free* (1914), although airships and submarines had appeared well before in Jules Verne and again in Griffith's *The Angel of the Revolution* (1893). These were massive projects well out of the reach of individuals. Dr. Moreau in H.G. Wells's 1894 novel engaged in genetic engineering, but on a faraway, isolated island. In brief, the practical possibilities lagged behind fantasies of universal destruction.

As we enter a new fin de siècle that technological gap no longer exists. There is a new wave of relativism and nihilism on the ideological level: the campaign against reason, rejection of truth as corresponding to reality, moral philosophy and so on. But there is also the new wave of alternative, quasi-religious beliefs in witchcraft, magic and apocalyptic visions. All this would be less innocuous if the upsurge of post-modernism, New Age, and sectarianism would not coincide with striking scientific and technological advances. It may make it possible to act out the fantasies of 1900 in the real world of the year 2000, if they have not become a reality already.

Visions of disaster were not absent in the two decades prior to World War I: the earthquakes of Messina and San Francisco, the *Titanic*, and speculations about Hailey's comet inspired writers and painters. Beckmann, to mention one, painted scenes from the Messina earthquake and the *Titanic*. Interestingly, the many books about impending war published at the time did not dwell on the horrors of war but on other aspects. Big cities collapsed, not as a result of a military attack but for other, sometimes unspecified or farfetched reasons: London drowning in mud, St. Petersburg consumed by fire. The real horrors of war, not surprisingly, appeared as a major theme only during the war, and thereafter. The extent of suffering and damage caused by modern war was beyond the imagination of all but a tiny handful of contemporaries. There was something abstract, even metaphysical about the prophecies of doom. When Nietzsche was putting his thoughts about the coming two hundred years on paper and predicted catastrophe and nihilism, he was not dealing with mankind as such, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

only human culture. And Richard Wagner, the composer of *Götterdämmerung*, the end of the world (not just of civilization), was also the composer of *Parsifal,* a dream of redemption and a better world.

However enormous the losses and the damage of World War I, the existing weapons at the time had their limits. The most dreaded weapon of World War I, poison gas, was far from decisive in military terms and was not used in World War II—except against defenseless civilians. The heyday of fears about doomsday weapons and the fate of the last men on earth was in the fifties and sixties. These fears receded after that, perhaps because there was increasing acceptance of the idea that even though there were, and perhaps always would be, some crazy states, they would not commit suicide. Or to put it another way, the assumption was that while the rate of suicides among individuals in society seems to have been fairly constant, the number of societies which have committed suicide has been very small.

The use of weapons by terrorist groups is a different chapter. There were dozens of reports in the 70s and 80s about the alleged use or contemplated use of chemical substances by terrorist groups in many parts of the world, including the Baader-Meinhof gang in Germany, the Minutemen, Palestinian terrorists, Huk terrorists, neo nazi groups, the Alphabet Bomber of Los Angeles, and even the Animal Liberation Front in Britain. While many of these reports appear dubious, there was little doubt that some of these groups, or extremist elements within them, were at least contemplating the use of such agents. What should have caused alarm was the fact that there was an increasing number of reports concerning minute, quasi-religious sects with names such as "Covenant, Sword and Arm of the Lord," of which no one had ever heard. It was precisely from such groups that the first massive act of violence came, the Tokyo subway attack in March 1995, and there is every reason to assume that this event constituted the dawn of a new era.

I recently read a book by a well informed Italian author named Lorenzo Pinna, entitled *Cinque ipotesi sulla fine del mondo*. Pinna is far more optimistic than Nostradamus. who predicted that the world would come to an end in the year 3797. He also predicted that around the year 2000 natural catastrophes would happen as well as political and religious changes which would be the beginning of the end. Pinna mentions all kinds of threats from the cosmos, epidemics, lack of water and air, which, while real, do not seem sufficient in themselves to cause the end of the world. His fifth hypothesis concerning the dimming of the sun is probably billions of years away, and by that time our descendants might be able to transfer their business, such as it is, to Alpha Centauri.

Edith Kurzweil: Thank you. Our next speaker is Robert Wistrich. He is Professor of Modern European and Jewish History at Hebrew University of Jerusalem.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Robert Wistrich: I have chosen a vast topic: "A Comparison of the Situation of the Jewish World as it was a Hundred Years Ago and Today." I thought that it would be useful to begin by comtemplating the year 1896 and what I think was the most important single document or piece of writing in terms of its long-term impact on the Jewish world, namely *Der Judenstaat* by Theodor Herzl, which was published in February of 1896 in Vienna. Although it could hardly be described as a bestseller at the time, there is no doubt that this fairly compact and concise work was the beginning of a historic process that even Herzl himself could not have envisaged at the moment of publication. It was perhaps the founding document of political Zionism and would set in motion the sequence of events which eventually led to the creation of the state of Israel in 1948. Herzl, we may recall, established the first Zionist congress in Basel in 1897.

If we look at the theses that Herzl put forth in *Der Judenstaat* in the context of the Jewish world as it then was, undoubtedly the single weightiest factor which he took into account was the rise of anti-Semitism as a political force throughout most of Europe. Herzl could see before him the spectacle of a triumphant anti-Semitic movement in his native Vienna. In 1896, the Christian social party, which had an anti-Semitic platform, was the strongest single party in Vienna. It formally came to power a year later, when Karl Lueger, the leader of that movement, was appointed mayor of Vienna. In France, where Herzl had spent four crucial years as a foreign correspondent, he had witnessed the rise of French anti-Semitism and the beginnings of what would come to be known as the Dreyfus affair. In Germany there had been an anti-Semitic movement since the 1880s and it enjoyed a significant representation in the Reichstag during the 1890s. Of course Tsarist Russia, which was considered by most Jews at that time as the most oppressive of the great powers, had already put into effect draconian anti-Jewish laws. Russia was the scene of terrible pogroms in 1881; the expulsion of Jews from Moscow at the beginning of the 1890s; the Kishinev pogrom of 1903 which occurred in Herzl's lifetime; and the pogrom wave of 1905-6, during the abortive revolution of those years. The Jewish question, as Herzl and the Zionist movement understood it a hundred years ago, was very much about finding a solution to the problem of anti-Semitism. Zionists were aware that this had cast a long, deep shadow over the emancipation of the Jews in Europe. But in the 1890s even those Jews who did not share the Zionist view began to feel that in many European countries (particularly in eastern and central Europe) they were living in enemy territory—*Feindesland*. The rise of anti-Semitism occurred, of course, in a certain context—there was a sense of impending social and political crisis, the decay of parliamentary institutions in Europe, anarchist violence. There was a climate of instability and cultural decadence, scandals, and the unraveling of liberalism, well-expressed by the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

prominent critic Max Nordau, in his notorious book of 1892, *Entartung* (Degeneration), which analyzed and diagnosed the ills of the century. He has an opening chapter in that work appropriately called "Fin de siècle." Of course, this is a French term and France was in many ways the *locus classicus* for this pervasive sense of corruption, decay, restlessness, decadence, deterioration of morals, alcoholism, crime, demographic decline, and irrationalist currents in art and culture. The phenomenon was found throughout Europe, but in France it was felt more acutely. Nordau, who in *Entartung* focused particularly on art, culture and literature, pronounced a pretty devastating verdict on the pathologies of the European culture of his day. To some extent Herzl may have shared this view, though he never expressed himself in such harsh terms about the culture of which he himself was such a stylish product. There is an interesting paradox in the attitude of the Zionists of that generation towards Europe, because many might have agreed with at least part of Nordau's assessment, and yet their version of Zionism was a very European one. They fully shared the liberal enlightenment form of Europeanism. They sought to salvage the best of European culture and to transplant it to the eastern Mediterranean, to a Jewish state. From the outset there is an interesting mix of optimism and pessimism in the Zionist view of the fin de siècle and of Europe itself. The pessimism derived from the awareness that that culture had produced the specter of an irrational anti-Semitism that was probably incurable and ineradicable. This deeply pessimistic vision was all-too graphically confirmed by the Holocaust forty years later. The optimistic aspect lay in the belief that Europe, even in its fin de siècle condition, represented a superior civilization. This was after all the heyday of European imperialism and colonization, and modern Zionism with its idea of transplanting the Jewish people back to Zion emerged in that context. European colonialism, we should remember, was considered quite progressive at the time. Of course, Zion itself, or Palestine, was then controlled by the Ottoman Empire. In 1900 it contained only fifty thousand Jews. Just think of that for a moment if you want to grasp the scale of the transformation that the Jewish world has undergone in one hundred years. Fifty thousand Jews represents a mere 0.5 percent of world Jewry at that time and little more than ten percent of the population of Palestine as a whole. Since demography is rather important in any assessment of what has happened in the last century, let me just give you a few figures that may illustrate the the scale of the quantative changes that have occurred since then. In 1900 there were 10.34 million Jews in the world. More importantly, the Jews were an overwhelmingly *European* people. Eight and a half million Jews lived on the European continent, in which I include Russia. Eighty-two percent of world Jewry lived in Europe, of whom seventy to seventy-five percent lived in Russia and eastern Europe. Russian Jewry alone accounted for fifty percent of world

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jewry in 1900. American Jewry represented about one million, that's to say ten percent of the Jewish people. Of course, that was to change very rapidly in the first decades of the twentieth century, so that on the eve of the Holocaust, the largest single Jewish community in the world was already located in the U.S. Nevertheless, if we take the year 1939, on the eve of the Holocaust, even then fifty-seven percent of the world Jewish population still lived in Europe. We are talking about 9.5 million Jews, mainly of Ashkenazi origin, many of them still Yiddish-speaking. They were concentrated mostly in Poland, Soviet Russia, and other parts of eastern Europe, but also in Germany. The Holocaust destroyed two-thirds of European Jewry. That is the primary and overwhelming reason why the Jews are no longer a European people and why, increasingly since 1945, the world Jewish map has become increasingly simplified. It is much more bipolar, with two great centers: Israel and the U.S. In Europe there are now for the first time since the eighteenth century less than two million Jews. For the first time since the middle ages there are more Jews in western Europe than eastern Europe. The largest single community on the European continent is the French Jewish community, the only one which has shown a significant growth rate since 1945, the only one to have actually increased its size and vitality since the Holocaust, overwhelmingly due to considerable Sephardic North African immigration.

If we now look at the global Jewish situation, I think we can immediately see the huge differences that exist between the present and the past. First of all I would suggest that there has probably never been a period in history where Jews have experienced greater social acceptance than now, where they have been more a part of the "establishment," of the dominant economic, cultural, and even political elites, particularly in the western diaspora. They've enjoyed, in the more recent post-war period, an unprecedented climate of tolerance, openness, and willingness to accept cultural differences. A society like France, for instance, which since 1789 had been very reluctant to accept any deviation from the Jacobin norm, from the uniform mold of the republican nation, has acknowledged the "right to difference." The same is true throughout most of Europe today. Anti-Semitism is, it would seem to me, relatively dormant at the present time. This is less true of Russia and some parts of eastern Europe, but anti-Semitism does not have the same empirical significance it once did because of the tragic decimation of most Eastern European Jewish communities. This is also true, for different reasons, of the Arab and Islamic world. Anti-Semitism no longer affects the indigenous Jewish communities, which have virtually disappeared. There is, of course, a deep hostility towards Israel and Zionism and this also spills over into violence against Diaspora Jews in the form of terrorist actions. Nevertheless, anti-Semitism seems a much weaker force currently than it was one hundred years ago and certainly

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

than it was in the 1930s and 40s. Its ideological basis, however, remains remarkably stable and its potential should never be underestimated. Many of the intellectual currents that fed into modern anti-Semitism a hundred years ago are still with us—whether we are looking at irrationalism, illiberalism, ethnic nationalism, conspiracy theories or religious fundamentalism. Anti-Semitic groups in contemporary society very often share a range of ideological beliefs that were present a hundred years ago. In that sense not so much has changed. But the current political significance of anti-Semitism is not overwhelming.

I would make the provocative argument that, in terms of collective Jewish survival today, in some ways "philo-semitism" may be more dangerous to Jews than anti-Semitism. I would at least ask you to think about it. When I say philo-semitism, I am not alluding to love of Jews as such, because this has always been a somewhat ambivalent phenomenon, but the readiness to genuinely accept Jews both as individuals and as a group—the kind of openness that allows Jews equal access to all areas of society, culture, and politics. It is the open society that has led to the success story of the Jews in the last thirty to forty years. Just think of a few examples at random: look at this country, at the Clinton administration, was there ever an administration that had more Jewish advisors? I also think of Great Britain, where I grew up, which currently has a foreign secretary who is Jewish and minister of the interior who is a Jew. In France there is quite a tradition of having Jewish prime ministers and there were many Jewish cabinet ministers under President Mitterrand. Many presidents of American ivy league universities are Jews. Probably thirty to forty percent of the faculty at elite universities in the U.S. are Jewish. But in the 1930s quotas were used against Jews, it was difficult to find one tenured Jewish professor. Wherever you look you can find prominent Jews in the media, in the professions, in academia, the arts and sciences, and of course in Hollywood. It may well be a myth to say that Jews dominate Hollywood, but they are undoubtedly a very important presence. Certainly, there were precedents: one thinks of Germany, Austria, and Hungary at the turn of the century. There is no doubt that if you consider banking, commerce, intellectual life, the cultural world as a whole, the sciences, (especially physics, chemisty, medicine) Jews had made their mark by that time in a spectacular way. In Central Europe, they provided a huge galaxy of talents that profoundly shaped and transformed modern culture. But there was one great difference between then and now. In spite of their creative success, Jews were not truly accepted in pre-war Europe and there was a level of resentment, antagonism, and hostility to their achievement which, I do not believe, exists to anything like the same extent today. Or if it exists, it is so well disguised that it is difficult to actually put your finger on it. This does not mean that the American Jewish diaspora is totally immune to the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fate of German Jewry in the 1930s, should the U.S. experience a catastrophic economic and political collapse. Nevertheless there are very significant differences between the two societies, which make this eventuality unlikely. But if things have improved so much, how can one explain the rather pessimistic prognoses that have been made about the future of Jewry in the twenty-first century, particularly with reference to the western diaspora?

By 1900 this was already one of the major themes in the Zionist movement. Then, as now, it was seen both by Zionists and orthodox Jews as a deeply destructive force, one that emperiled the future of the Jewish people. Along with assimilation, which entails a complete social and cultural integration into the larger society, there generally comes a loosening of family bonds and the atrophy of religion. But today it is much more than that: the decline of Jewish fertility rates, and above all unprecedented levels of intermarriage—over fifty percent in the U.S. and similar rates throughout the western diaspora. Again there were precedents: on the eve of the Nazi seizure of power, the rate of intermarriage for German Jews was close to thirty percent, but such high levels were exceptions at that time. Disaffiliation was not yet the dominant pattern in the main centers of the Jewish world. This is no longer the case. Therefore, the pessimists argue that this hemorrhage of the body of the Jewish people is today so rampant that it may foreshadow the end of Jewry in the twenty-first century, at any rate outside of Israel and of the orthodox enclaves—which are not directly affected by it. But orthodoxy represents no more than about fifteen percent of the population in most Jewish communities around the world, including Israel itself.

A character in one of Philip Roth's novels says, *à propos* of this Jewish demographic problem, that what Hitler couldn't achieve with Auschwitz, American Jews are doing to themselves in the bedroom. We might also mention the impact of alternative lifestyles, which includes gay and lesbian Jews; the high divorce rate and the alienation of Jewish youth. Even more disconcerting is the lack of spirituality in the Jewish world, the absence of inspiring or even talented leadership, and the disappearance of an autonomous Jewish culture to rival the overwhelming pull of gentile culture, in which Jews, of course, now play a major part. By contrast, in 1900, even as Jews were assimilating in the West they still had a cohesive religious and secular Jewish culture in Hebrew and Yiddish, reinforced by the power of ancient tradition. In eastern Europe, Russia, and the New World there were eight to nine million Jews who spoke Yiddish, so there was a Jewish folk-language. Today there are no more Jewish languages apart from Hebrew. That is undoubtedly one of the greatest achievements of Israel. There are at least four and a half million Jews in Israel who speak Hebrew, there are Palestinian Arabs who speak Hebrew, and there are also half a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

million *yordim* (Israelis who have left their country) who speak Hebrew. So Hebrew to some extent has filled that vacuum left by Yiddish (and by Ladino for the Sephardic Jews) though it is hardly the main language of the Jewish Diaspora, which today is indisputably English. This is one of the facets in the growing separation of Israel and the diaspora. Thus we arrive at the paradox that Jews have never had it so good and yet never have things seemed so precarious in terms of their long-term prospects for maintaining historic continuity and their cultural distinctiveness as a people.

This brings me to the last point I wish to make, concerning the Jewish State and its role in this story. Clearly, Israel is the single most important difference between 1900 and 2000. To that extent Herzl's prophetic vision has been vindicated, even though it was very much a minority view at the time. Israel today is more or less a part of the modern Western world in terms of *per capita* income, developed technology, cultural and scientific achievements, its literacy rate, health standards, and many other indicators. It would, of course, be simplistic to describe it purely as a western society. It might be more accurately characterised as a Mediterranean society with a Western face, Eastern European institutions, and an increasingly Middle Eastern population, both Jewish and Arab. More than half of Israel's Jewish population are Sephardim—mainly from North Africa and the Levant.

Sephardic Jewry, which seemed to be a negligable factor in Jewish history at the beginning of this century, in terms of numbers, geographic location, economic and political weight through Israel has largely come to play a significant part in the fate and destiny of Jewish people once more. In France too, the Sephardim have displayed a remarkable vitality and ability to take advantage of the educational opportunities available in an open society. Their voice is also heard politically, which was rarely the case a century ago. This reflects one of the greatest changes in the Jewish world during the past hundred years. Experience has vindicated one of Herzl's core ideas, that without a political center the Jewish people will face catastrophe. According to Zionism, the great weakness of the diaspora was that, as a dispersed people without any political organization, Jews would be powerless in the face of a threat to their existence. Israel certainly represents the most centripetal force in a very centrifugal Jewish Diaspora around the world today. Perhaps the Jewish State is no longer the unifying force that it once was for the diaspora. Its policies are not uncontroversial in the eyes of many Jews, although Israel has probably been and still remains the single most important common cause for Jews around the world. Israel has some obvious advantages. It does not suffer from the core problems of the Jewish Diaspora—namely cultural assimilation, disaffiliation, a low birth-rate, and intermarriage on a massive scale, nor is it dependent on the whims of the non-Jewish majority. It is clearly and unmistakably a Jewish nation; its ethno-religious identity is not in danger,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

and the transmission of the Jewish historical legacy is not a major problem. There are problems relating to what kind of a Jewish nation Israel is or should be, what kind of culture and identity it should espouse—problems which arouse strong passions in Israel itself. But its collective continuity, as long as it can survive as an independent state, is not in danger. Nevertheless we have seen disturbing signs of sectarianism, fanaticism, and divisiveness in Israel during the past year, beginning with the assassination of Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin by a religious zealot. We have a form of extremist Zionism today in Israel that neither Herzl, Weizmann nor any of the leaders who immediately followed them could have envisioned, which would no doubt have alarmed and distressed them. We have seen the implacable hostility of a sizeable part of the Arab and Muslim world for over fifty years as well as the volatile, violent, and unpredictable nature of Middle Eastern Arab politics. The dangerous cocktail of absolutism, terrorism and religious fundamentalism relates to what Walter Laqueur was saying earlier, as if some of the worst nightmares in 1900 were coming true in our own time—particularly the real possibility of nuclear terrorism initiated by a handful of fanatical people. In the Middle Eastern context where you have deep-seated national, religious, and political-territorial conflict and where terror has long been an established political weapon, the danger of irreparable damage is great. The biggest question mark facing Israel at the dawn of the twenty-first century, which therefore has a bearing on the Jewish people as a whole, is whether or not the forces of economics and technology will ultimately prevail over those of ideology and religious fanaticism. We have seen that in the short run, the idea of a new Middle East is utopian. We are still living in the nasty, brutish old Middle East, though there is a glimpse of light at the end of the tunnel.

Given the perspective of one hundred years, the Jewish people, despite the trauma of the Holocaust, have indeed come a long way. They have been *empowered*. They are an integral part of the advanced world. In 1996, in Israel as well as America, the Jews are a force to be reckoned with, for good and for bad.

I will leave you with a few questions to which I have no definitive answer because I do not claim to be a prophet. It is not the job of the historian to be the prophet except when looking backward—and even that temptation should be resisted. The questions are: is there a single Jewish people today, or are Israel and the diaspora moving in divergent and perhaps even opposite directions? Are the Jews already in the process of losing their ethnic and cultural distinctiveness? Can Judaism maintain itself in the twenty-first century as a unique religious civilization? Will Israel continue to be a Zionist state or are the signals of post-Zionism already a herald of what is to come? Will there be any kind of a viable secular Jewish culture outside of the enclaves of orthodoxy, which are growing proportionately

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in strength among the Jewish people as a whole? Will there be a real content for Jewish life, a priceless if elusive spiritual quality which can still be transmitted to future generations? Will the twenty-first century see the gradual withering away of the Jewish people in the diaspora, the end of a great tradition of nearly three thousand years? Or is the messianic hope that the golden days of Judaism are still before us still valid?

Walter Laqueur: We listened to a very moving and interesting assessment which, in my opinion, is based on a number of assumptions that Robert Wistrich did not make entirely clear. Let me give a few examples: it is perfectly true what you said about demographic trends, but the same demographic trends prevail in Europe, certainly in western Europe. Projections by most demographers show that, by the following generation, western Europe will account for a very small percentage of the world's population. Let me quote my favorite author H. G. Wells once again. In 1900 he was asked by a British journal, *The Fortnightly*, what he thought about the future of big cities. He had a number of brilliant ideas but his projections for the future were totally wrong. He was absolutely sure that in the year 2000 London would have twenty-five million inhabitants, Paris would have twenty-eight, Rome will have thirty and so on and so forth. But today we know that London, Paris, and Berlin actually have fewer inhabitants than they did in 1900. The point I want to make is that the demographic trend is a fairly universal one. Secondly, and more importantly, your thesis is based on the assumption that peoples, certain peoples, have an eternal mission. This may be true but it is not something which one can take for granted, because the whole of human history is (as Voltaire once said) a history of people going up the ladder and going down. The idea that certain people have an eternal mission, an eternal contribution to one culture cannot be taken for granted. In addition you pointed to the dangers of assimilation, and this is of course true. When one says assimilation one means emancipation, so here's a dividing line that is not always clear. Assimilation always has a kind of negative connotation, it means giving up. Emancipation of course is thought to be good, assimilation is bad.

Lastly, of course, Israel. Part of me is there, but again we must ask ourselves what specific contribution this state is likely to make. Will it just be a normalization of Jewish existence as Herzl and his Zionists sought?

Robert Wistrich: Let me take these points one by one. First of all demography: I agree that all projections need to be treated with caution, which is why I don't fully share the more pessimistic prognosis made by demographers about the likely disappearance of the bulk of the Jewish people in the diaspora during the twenty-first century. That seems to me to be based

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

on projections of existing trends that are unlikely to be fulfilled, simply because there are so many unexpected and incalculable surprises in history. I still remember the demographic arguments in internal Israeli politics in the 1980s between the two major parties, when neither of them dreamed that within the decade more than a half-million Russian Jews would immigrate to Israel and completely transform its demographic situation. Certainly demography is not an exact science. However, I am not altogether consoled by the thought that this is a wider demographic trend. For instance, the diminution of Europeans in the U.S. is very obvious: America, and I'm saying this without any value judgments, is literally changing from a society that was very white, Protestant, and European, into something else. There is nothing wrong with that, similar trends can be observed elsewhere. You alluded to London, Paris, and Berlin. Of course, I agree. But as someone who is not only an analyst but somebody who also cares deeply about the issue of whether there will still be a Jewish community in the twenty-first century, the fact that this is happening elsewhere does not necessarily make me feel less concerned or better about it. And I don't believe that this is an inevitable fate. I think it is very difficult to reverse these trends, but not impossible. Of course, I don't believe in the romantic notion of the "eternal mission" of the Jewish people, but I do think that it has a vocation, not to say a unique role in history—which doesn't mean that other peoples do not have their own special characteristics and gifts. The Jews are the people of the book, who gave monotheism to the world. I don't think there is another people in history that has had such a self-conscious, sharply-defined sense of its own vocation. Now, belief in missions can be a tricky and dangerous business and we have seen the perversions to which this can lead in the twentieth century. When I see skull-capped, bearded zealots in the West Bank talking about their god-given, exclusive right to the Holy Land and the way their eschatology is framed, I don't want any part of that mission. But I do think there is another ethical, humanist mission that the Jewish people has historically embodied and it is desirable that we should continue to be faithful to that ideal. Whether this is possible under the conditions of the twenty-first century is certainly an open question. I happen to think it desirable that Jews continue to contribute something special to the economy of the world, not only in the material sense, but more importantly, in a spiritual sense. That seems to me indispensable, and a humanity without the Jewish people making a distinctive and independent mark on its development is just not the same.

I think that by and large we agree on the dangers of assimilation. However, the contours of the problem have changed significantly, even in countries which traditionally argued that assimilation in the sense of accepting and integrating Jews as a group, demanded the abandonment of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

their distinctiveness except in the narrow field of religion. That was a nineteenth-century concept of emancipation that many Jews eagerly accepted. It has since been abandoned as unacceptable or too restrictive, not only by the Jews but by their host societies. A hundred years ago, Bernard Lazare, a French anarchist who was also a Jewish nationalist and a leading defender of Alfred Dreyfus, called assimilation *une doctrine bâtarde*, meaning that the price which Gentile society demanded for social acceptance was a betrayal of freedom and individuality. If the price asked of any minority, not just the Jews, is to abandon their distinctive culture—even when that culture is not harmful to other members of the society—this can no longer be true tolerance. Lazare was one of the first critics to demonstrate that an emancipation which entails assimilation would indeed have negative consequences for the integrity of free human groups in general.

Finally, with regard to Israel and normalization: True, right now the state of Israel does not shine like a light to most Gentiles, largely because it has had to live under extraordinarily adverse circumstances. To me it seems enough of an achievement that a vibrant democracy has survived in Israel under conditions of siege, in a country that has lived for fifty years in a state of emergency. This is not to excuse the many mistakes and unfortunate episodes that have happened in Israel's history. The question of what the Jewish State represents is really a major issue, and nobody can say exactly how it will be resolved. In Israel today there is a trend among many secularists to say that we should aspire to nothing more than a normal existence, to be like other peoples. Obviously, Israelis would dearly wish to have the burden of war ended, and everything that is associated with it, lifted from their backs. Since its birth, security has been the overriding concern on Israel's national agenda and this is, unfortunately, still the case today. Whether Israel can find a new role for itself that would be more consonant with the long and unique history of the Jewish people also depends on its neighbors. It has the potential. If we look very soberly at the real situation in the Middle East, if Israel were truly accepted and integrated into the region, it undoubtedly has the capacity to exercise economic, scientific-technical, intellectual, and educational leadership, just because it is the most developed society in the region. That leaves a big question about the willingness of its Arab neighbors to accept it and also about its own readiness to integrate into the region. Were this option to materialize, it would then raise a whole new set of issues concerning the distinctiveness of Israeli identity: the price of national integration might entail a degree of blending into the Middle Eastern environment that I'm not sure Israelis would universally welcome.

Stephen Kalberg: I want to ask Robert Wistrich to elaborate upon the issue of assimilation in Weimar Germany. I knew the rate of intermarriage

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

was pretty high, but not that it was thirty percent. How did that compare with intermarriage in Holland, France, Italy or Austria? More generally, are you aware of other measures of assimilation? What about access to higher education or access to the professions? Was the intermarriage rate higher among educated Germans than in other countries? Are there good comparative measures of assimilation that are available to us for the late twenties?

Robert Wistrich: I think Walter Laqueur would be able to deal with Weimar Germany, about which he has written. But on the question of intermarriage, the statistic of thirty percent really applies to Berlin in the early 1930s. Intermarriage rates in Germany on the eve of World War I were closer to twelve percent. There seems to have been a steady increase in the twenties and then especially in the last years of the Weimar Republic, when it became a major trend. Still, intermarriage never attained the scale we see today across the western diaspora. However, prognoses were made not only on the basis of intermarriage, but by considering other measures of assimilation, including income, occupational profile, conversion rates, the limited use of Jewish languages compared to the use of the dominant language in the country, urbanisation and educational levels. There were books by Jewish demographers that predicted the disappearance of German Jewry within a generation or two. In his famous book, *Der Untergang der Deutschen Juden*, published in 1913, Felix Theilhaber actually envisaged the peaceful extinction, in fifty years or so, of the Jewish community in Germany. At that time, the young Hitler had just arrived in Munich and was still an unemployed artist.

Walter Laqueur: I know some of the figures, but not others. Of course, in Germany the rate of intermarriage was higher in big cities than in smaller communities. In countries like Holland and Denmark, it had reached fifty percent at the time of World War I. However, after that war there was a stream of immigrants from eastern Europe, for which we have no precise figures. When the Nazis came to power, they didn't know, and no one knew, whether there were two hundred thousand or four hundred thousand children of mixed marriages. As far as Italy is concerned, I don't think there are figures, for reasons unknown to me.

Tibor Machan: I wanted to ask whether there is or has been another group anywhere in the world that might be said to confront a similar concern about its fate, about assimilation, about transformation along the lines that you were articulating about Jews? I'm a Hungarian refugee who came here when I was seventeen. I gave up Hungary, but not completely. There are certain old-country sights and sounds that still resonate with me, but

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

teaching my kids Hungarian or marrying a Hungarian was never an issue for me. I just don't have that sort of sense of togetherness, or identity, or the need to preserve something. I'm wondering whether I'm somehow remiss or failing to live up to some expectations.

Robert Wistrich: That's a good point. Off the top of my head I cannot think of another group that appears to be as preoccupied with its continuity, with preserving the chain of the generations, as the Jewish people are. You could argue that much of modern nationalism, in a slightly distorted sense, actually picks up on that theme in a more secularized form. And you might even argue that this is an offshoot of something that the Jewish tradition itself initiated. In the U. S., people from a Hungarian or Polish background, Irish Americans, Italians, Greek Americans, Afro or Jewish Americans are all hyphenated Americans, the Jews perhaps more so. The idea of the melting pot has almost evaporated.

John Raymond: If intermarriage hadn't occurred on a massive scale, and Jews kept marrying Jews, would inbreeding have caused genetics to break down?

Robert Wistrich: Yes, perhaps there is a price to be paid for endogamy. There are some negative consequences of inbreeding that have been pointed out by Jews themselves. I think that is a valid point. Of course, a century ago, racists and anti-Semites used to argue that intermarriage with Jews was corrupting the purity of the white race. Nobody talks about that anymore, except for the lunatic fringe and sections of the radical Right. Jews, who favored assimilation sometimes argued earlier in the century that intermarriage was beneficial because it improved the stock on both sides.

Gunther Stent: There are identified hereditary medical disorders, such as Tay-Sachs disease and hypertrophism of the adrenal gland, the incidence of which is much higher among the Ashkenazi Jews than among the general population. Yet these relatively higher incidences are still so low that they cannot be a substantial factor influencing Jews to intermarry with gentiles. No doubt, there are many reasons for seeking intermarriage, but fear of the noxious hereditary consequences of endogamy is unlikely to be one of them.

Wolfgang Waldner: There was an article in the *New York Times* recently about the Holocaust memorial in Vienna. The British sculptor, Rachel Whiteread, won a competition for a memorial commemorating the Holocaust victims in Austria. The article was lengthy, with a couple of photographs by the chief art critic of the *New York Times*. He described the

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

political situation in Austria, and wrote about widespread anti-Semitism. As you can imagine, as a representative of Austria in this country, I was not very happy to read that and neither were our ambassador and other friends. My question is to Professor Wistrich. As a specialist in anti-Semitism and modern European history, do you agree with this assessment by the *New York Times*? How does anti-Semitism in Austria compare with the degree of anti-Semitism in other central or western European countries such as France, or the U.S.?

Robert Wistrich: There was an attempt to gauge the level of anti-Semitic attitudes in those countries, initiated by the American Jewish Committee. I seem to recall that these studies were made in 1991 through 1995. I think they show that Austria scores fairly high on the scale, but somewhere between the western and eastern European norms. That is to say, more anti-Semitic than Britain or Holland, less so than Poland or Slovakia—much as one would expect. Such empirical research is useful but limited in value. It does give a snapshot of attitudes at a given moment, in response to questions that might be asked in many different ways but rarely do more than scratch the surface. It is impossible to deny that in the twentieth century Austria has had a very robust tradition of anti-Semitism. I think this has been somewhat attenuated in the last twenty years, with the exception of the Waldheim affair—which certainly did lead to a temporary rise in anti-Jewish feelings. In a country where you had a significant proportion of people who had been implicated as members of the Nazi party and had been active anti-Semites in the 1930s and during the Holocaust, it is not surprising that anti-Semitism remained fairly high after the war. On the other hand, it was never officially a part of the state ideology or the program of the main political parties, after 1945. Anti-Semitism festered and it wasn't dealt with properly for a long time. The Waldheim affair paradoxically had a number of positive consequences: it led to a direct confrontation of the problem and I think that once Austria gave up its syndrome of denial, it was better able to face this dark aspect of its past. There is certainly evidence that Austrian cultural and political organizations have been making sincere efforts to correct what was not done in an earlier period. I think that there is some room for optimism. Austria is today rather similar to other European countries, where xenophobia in the general sense is strong but Jews are no longer its primary target. This is another respect, though less sympathetic, in which Jews are better off than they've ever been previously, whether in the U.S. or in Europe. Populist xenophobia is flourishing, but I don't think anti-Semitism is currently higher in Austria than in neighboring countries.

Edith Kurzweil: I could second this comment on a purely subjective basis. I've gone back to Vienna many times, for many years. Something

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

happened after the Waldheim affair. Shortly thereafter, there was a big conference in Vienna on "Vertriebene Vernunft." Although attendance was relatively poor, a dialogue began. I also noticed, again in a very subjective way, that before then, when people asked me "why do you speak such good German," I answered that I was born in Vienna. Before, that would end the conversation, now it no longer does. Also, there is much more interest in that past. And academics are doing studies about their emigrés, for the most part the refugees. Things have changed.

Speaker: Is there some kind of historical relationship between attitudes about commerce, striving for wealth, and so on, so that attitudes about capitalism ultimately emerge as anti-Semitic?

Robert Wistrich: Historically speaking, ever since about the mid-nineteenth century, one of the most important motifs of modern anti-Semitism has been the identification of Jews with capitalism. On the Left and on the Right there was the notion that Jews are the driving force of high finance, that capitalism itself is a manifestation of the "Jewish spirit"; that Jews are by nature exploitative and created capitalism for their own benefit as part of their striving towards world domination. This idea can be found in Marx, Bakunin, Fourier, and Proudhon and on the conservative Right. Of course, it became one of the major foundations of Nazi ideology. It persisted in certain disguised forms under Stalinist Communism and it is still around today. It strikes me that this anti-capitalist hostility to Jews has less resonance in the world of today than it did fifty or one hundred years ago and it is an interesting question why this should be the case. I might suggest that as *laissez-faire* capitalism has become more acceptable in so many different parts of the world—we see the response of the post-communist societies where everyone wants to jump onto the free market capitalism bandwagon—anti-capitalism itself is no longer the force that it once used to be. Therefore tarring Jews with this particular brush is not a particularly effective weapon against them. This anti-capitalist idea is still around in Russia, where it might have a bit more resonance.

Walter Laqueur: I agree. But it is also true that in those countries where anti-Semitism was most rampant there was little capitalism, and Jews were poor—mainly in Russia, Poland, and Romania. This means that while capitalism, to a certain extent, might explain the rise of modern anti-Semitism, I don't think it is a main factor. Certainly not in countries with the largest concentration of Jews.

But let me come back to a question that was raised before: is there a historical parallel with another group of people who have this equal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fanaticism in fighting for their identity and survival? I don't know. But history shows us that the smaller the group, the greater the fear of being lost, the greater the urge to survive. Think of Bosnia. Look at Spain. Spain has two major minorities: the Catalan and the Basque. Among the Catalan there has been no terrorism whatsoever, among the Basque a great deal. Why? There are many Catalans, they are rich, and do not feel swamped by the Spaniards. But the Basques' situation is different. There are relatively few, they are economically unimportant, and they have a real fear that they will disappear.

Alfred Eisenpreis: The financing of various wars during the ninteenth century was a major issue in dealing with the court of St. Petersburg. Other wars involved the Rothschilds and other banking houses, so that issue, I think, had a great deal of acceptance. It was brought to life in the recent biography of Rothschild, which related a story about the widow being asked if there would be a war and she said no, my sons will not allow it, they will not finance it.

But I wanted to ask a question that goes beyond the theme of this conference. Huntington's new book talks about the straits in which western civilization finds itself, trying to maintain and preserve the traditions of western culture beyond the year 2000. We have pretty much implied that the traditions are going to be around. Where do you see changes that might be touched on? Dr. Laqueur referred to H.G. Wells's comment on big cities. That city of twenty million is not London but Mexico City, Caracas, Lagos. I think we have implied a somewhat insular approach. Maybe it is worth a word or two to talk about where during this coming century traditions might be moving to.

Robert Wistrich: When you told that anecdote about the Rothschilds it crossed my mind what a great force for peace the Rothschild family really was, if they could avoid wars. They should be praised! But in terms of the future cultural shape of the world, I cannot help thinking of the billion or so Chinese. China's rise to Great Power status is almost inevitable, I would think, in the coming century. What implications will that have? I think about the Chinese and the Jews as the two most ancient civilizations that are still around, based though they are on completely different conditions of survival. All those millions of Chinese have never had a demographic problem—or rather their problem is the opposite of the Jews—they themselves feel that they are too many! They have been rooted in their territory, in the same place, for centuries, whereas the Jews had to invent the most mobile and portable of civilizations. I can't answer the wider question about which configurations will turn out to be dominant. But there is a tendency in the West to assume that Western—predominately American and to some extent

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

European—cultural hegemony will continue on into the next century. That is by no means certain. I think that English most likely will remain the *lingua franca* around the world, whatever the influence of the Chinese will be. But to come back to the Jews: I think that one of the reasons why they have survived longer than any other people is precisely their diasporic civilization. That's why I'm concerned about the fact that it may be in the process of erosion, perhaps irredeemable decline. I think Israel has good prospects for maintaining itself, at least for the next fifty years. But, historically, it is really the disapora that has preserved the Jews. This is especially ironic, because twentieth century nationalism and the ideology of Zionism was based on opposite premises—as the Zionist leader, Vladimir Jabotinsky put it—if the Jews do not liquidate the diaspora (he preferred the term *Galut*, meaning exile) then the diaspora will liquidate them. Hence the Zionists rooted themselves in the land of Israel and a territorial nationality. I think that the Jewish Diaspora still has a message for other peoples. The contemporary world is in a process of diasporization—migrating peoples, exiles within exiles—and the lengthy Jewish experience of diaspora is highly relevant to many other peoples and cultures. I know this is not an answer to your question, but it's a thought-provoking aspect which may grow in importance.

Walter Laqueur: I happened recently to reread Bellamy and I was impressed because he not only envisaged the existence of credit cards, which put him a few decades ahead, but he also envisioned a kind of welfare state, a vaguely socialist society, which again considering the time, and America, was a remarkable feat. But on the whole, I think it is most difficult to predict values, creeds, and beliefs. It is relatively easy to project technological development. For instance: I was reading the *Washington Post* of January 1, 1901. A man, not a famous scientist, noted that in the 1800s the highest speed on the road was about six miles, that in the year 1900 it was sixty miles per hour, so he thought it stood to reason that by the year 2000 we would move at six hundred miles per hour. Since this is impossible under water, and unlikely on land, it most likely would be in the air. This was a few years after the Wright brothers, so this kind of projection is possible and frequently correct. But new messages, new creeds, and new values, cannot be quantified.

Gunther Stent: Bellamy predicted a couple other things. One was the end of home-cooking and in that sense he anticipated McDonald's. But he also predicted the end of public symphony concerts since music would be piped into everybody's home via the recently invented telephone. So there he was wrong. As for the future of Zionism, suppose that the Arabs decide that they have suffered enough, that it is against their economic interest to keep on fighting the Jews, and that there will be peace and a Middle-Eastern

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Economic Community. What would the future State of Israel be like in that case? It would, of course, be physically secure, but would the "Jewish experience" survive once the external pressure of the Muslim world ceases to exist?

Robert Wistrich: The optimist might answer you by invoking Muslim Spain—I am referring to the great Judeo-Arab Muslim civilization that developed there, in the middle ages. That cultural symbiosis has often been seen as one of the high points of Jewish history. Indeed in ninteenth-century Christian Europe, Muslim Spain and the achievements of Sephardic Jews served as an example to Gentiles and Jews alike, concerning the benefits of Jewish emancipation. So, the optimists could say that in the twenty-first century we might have a Judeo-Arab economic pact which would make the Middle East a flourishing region again. A new civilization could emerge. There would be no more emphasis on Islam's hostility to the Jews, instead we would be talking about the many affinities that have always existed between Jews and Muslims, which run deeper than all the political and military strife of the twentieth century. I doubt that this rosy vision is about to be fulfilled in the next five to ten years, though it is not quite as utopian as many people imagine. The pessimists—or perhaps we should call them realists—point to the deep and well-founded Israeli distrust of the Palestinians and surrounding Arab nations, to hard-line Islamic rejection of Israel with its total opposition to any Jewish state on what is seen as Muslim soil. In this context, peace is only a tactic, a temporary truce until the moment of weakness, when Israeli defenses are down or when Muslim Arab strength has sufficiently risen. In between those views is the more probable emergence of a pragmatic calculation that peace might bring mutual benefits. There is no doubt that cooperation is preferable to confrontation, even if it is only limited and gradual to begin with. In that case, what would be the meaning of Israel's integration into the Middle East? For instance, could you ever have significant intermarriage for Jews and Arabs inside Israel or in the neighboring communities? It's unlikely but not beyond the bounds of possibility in fifty years' time. There are however serious resistances to it even in the most optimal conditions, which have their roots in both Judaism and Islam. On the other hand, secular Arabs, like Israelis, are also drawn to Western culture and although there is an anti-Western current in the Arab world, it may not be so overwhelmingly strong as we might think. There might in the future be a basis for some kind of cultural interaction as well as economic collaboration. There is, after all, a certain Middle Eastern flavor in Israeli society itself, not only among the Sephardic population, but simply as a result of living in the region. I think cultural problems of identity and belonging will increasingly be on the Israeli Jewish agenda, because I cannot imagine the Middle East continuing in the state of conflict that has existed for the last fifty years without a catastrophic outcome.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

All these reflections make me wonder whether there won't come a time when Jews might even be a little nostalgic for just a small helping of anti-Semitism. Just enough to remind themselves that they have to close ranks and preserve their existence, when all the other more positive and venerable reasons for being a Jew may tend to fade. A religious Jew would say that he draws his *raison d'être* from Judaism as a religion; then there were the secular modern ideologies of Jewish nationalism and Jewish socialism. But because anti-Semitism was so persistent and so strong, their external oppression knit the Jews into a cohesive group as much as did their positive beliefs. One of the points I am making is that the longer this open-ended tolerance goes on and we can live in a pluralistic society, the more problematic Jewish group existence and survival may become—at least outside of Israel and the enclaves of orthodox Jewry. This leads me to one final heretical thought. It is as if the Gentiles are now belatedly killing us with the milk of human kindness. Is this the new Jewish question?

Edith Kurzweil: Thank you, Robert. This is a question we'll have to ponder over dinner.

Session IV: Art and Literature

Igor Webb: Today, we'll start by hearing from Denis Donoghue. He is University Professor and Henry James Professor of English and American Letters at New York University. He will be speaking on "The Tragic Generation."

Denis Donoghue: People do not always see themselves in a dramatic light. There are periods during which most people are content to coincide with their time and to live by that coincidence. But there are certain periods, and sometimes certain decades, in which the most sensitive people feel that their lives are fateful or otherwise exemplary; they feel that they have been born to attend upon a catastrophe, an apocalypse, or at least a transition to such an event. They live in that expectation and among certain consequential emotions, whether of dread, exhilaration, insistent gaiety, or bad nerves. The thirties are a case in point, Auden's decade: everybody knew that it would end in war. The nineties, too: fin de siècle and maybe fin du globe. But it is not clear what these phrases mean. They may mean that those who lived through the decade thought of themselves as witnessing a crisis; but Frank Kermode has argued, in *The Sense of an Ending*, that "crisis is a way of thinking about one's moment, and not inherent in the moment itself." Transition "is merely that aspect of successiveness to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

which our attention is given." The fiction of transition, Kermode says, "reflects our lack of confidence in ends, our mistrust of the apportioning of history to epochs of this and that." "Our own epoch," he continues—writing in 1965—"is the epoch of nothing positive, only of transition." Kermode recognizes, too, that "the belief that one's own age is transitional between two major periods turns into a belief that the transition itself becomes an age, a saeculum." It would appear that at least a few people in the 1890s believed that something new was to come about and that they would attend upon 'the trembling of the veil.'

Not that the decade exactly coincided with its calendar. The nineties began in 1889 and ended in 1895, according to Richard Ellmann, but he meant Oscar Wilde's decade, not everyone else's. It would make equal sense to say that the nineties began in 1884 when Huysmans published *A Rebours* or in 1885 when Pater published *Marius the Epicurean*. It would also be reasonable to claim that the decade began, at least in England, on February 8, 1886. On that day a mass meeting of the unemployed was held in Trafalgar Square. The Fair Trade League had called the meeting, but it was appropriated by John Burns and H.M. Hyndman of the Social Democratic Federation. After the meeting, the crowd, led by Burns, marched up Pall Mall toward Hyde Park. When some members of the Reform Club jeered, the marchers responded by smashing windows, looting shops, and fighting with the police. On February 17 Burns, Hyndman, H.H.Champion, and John E. Williams appeared in Bow Street Police Court on a charge of sedition. On April 11 a jury found them not guilty. By global standards this was not a major event; but the riot on "Black Monday" was an instance—one of many—of social distress and anger. It also marked the degree to which the British political system failed to assimilate the needs and passions that expressed themselves in dangerous forms—anarchist movements, the endless question of Ireland, conflicts of class, fears that the Empire would be brought down by unspeakable practices abroad and corruption at home.

In *The Princess Casamassima* (1886) Henry James tried to recognize the passions that could not be contained and must disturb the 'vast smug surface' of social and political order. In the Preface to that novel, he says that "the value I wished most to render and the effect I wished most to produce were precisely those of our not knowing, of society's not knowing, but only guessing and suspecting and trying to ignore, what 'goes on' irreconcilably, subversively, beneath the vast smug surface." Gissing's *Demos* (1886) is another account of the surface and the forces that threaten its security. A few years later, in *The Secret Agent*, Conrad put his ear close to the same ground.

James employed one method, assigning to Hyacinth Robinson the role of witness and victim. Another method was that of the prophetic visions

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of Bellamy, Morris, Wells, and other writers. Richard Jefferies's *After London* (1885), W. H. Hudson's *A Crystal Age* (1887), Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward: 2000-1887* (1888), Morris's post-industrial reply to Bellamy, *News from Nowhere* (1891), Edward Carpenter's *Towards Democracy* (1883), Grant Allen's *The British Barbarians* (1895), Gissing's *New Grub Street* (1891) and Wells's dire repudiation of such visions in *The Time Machine* (1895) and *When the Sleeper Awakes* (1899) are diverse attempts to summon a future to come forth and transform, as if by magic, dangerous present forces. Max Nordau's *Degeneration* was an immense success when it was translated into English in 1895: it spoke to fears at large. Ian Watt has pointed out, in *Conrad in the Nineteenth Century*, that even Thomas Huxley, "Darwin's greatest advocate," was beset by the disjunction between natural man and social man, the theme of his Romanes lecture in 1893. "The ethical process," according to Huxley, "is in opposition to the principle of the cosmic process, and tends to the suppression of the qualities best fitted for success in that struggle." Freud's early essays on sexuality and culture, written in the last years of the old century, are meditations on the same theme, the degree to which neurasthenia is caused by a conflict between the instincts of sexuality and aggression on the one hand, and on the other, the sedate demands of civilization.

In the context of such perturbation it seems wishful thinking to appeal, as many writers in the nineteenth century did, to the 'Eternal Gospel' of Joachim di Fiore, according to which the kingdom of the Spirit will supersede that of the Son, just as the kingdom of the Son has superseded that of the Father; an age of Love will succeed to the ages of Law and Discipline. This appeal is found in Renan's 'Joachim de Flore et l'Évangile éternel', Pater's *The Renaissance*, Yeats's 'The Tables of the Law' and many other writings.

Meanwhile there were many local exacerbations to be dealt with and suffered. One of the most pressing of these was the change in the relation between writer and reader as a result of the Education Act of 1870. Toynbee argues in *A Study of History* that while "a system of universal compulsory gratuitous instruction has made education the birthright of every child," the expectations aroused by that achievement have been thwarted by several unforeseen obstacles. One stumbling-block "has been the inevitable impoverishment in the results of education when the process is made available for 'the masses' at the cost of being divorced from its traditional cultural background." A second obstacle has been "the utilitarian spirit in which the fruits of education are apt to be turned to account when they are brought within everybody's reach." The possibility of "turning education to account as a means of amusement for the masses—and of profit for the enterprising persons by whom the amusement is purveyed—has only arisen since the introduction of universal

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

elementary education; and this new possibility has conjured up a third stumbling-block which is the greatest of all." Toynbee says:

> The bread of universal education is no sooner cast upon the waters than a shoal of sharks arises from the depths and devours the children's bread under the educator's very eyes. In the educational history of England the dates speak for themselves. The edifice of universal elementary education was, roughly speaking, completed by Forster's Act in 1870; and the Yellow Press was invented some twenty years later—as soon, that is, as the first generation of children from the national schools had acquired sufficient purchasing-power—by a stroke of irresponsible genius which had divined that the educational philanthropists' labour of love could be made to yield a royal profit to a press-lord.

Toynbee goes on to claim that "in the latter-day perversion of our Western Press, we see the 'drive' of Western Industrialism and Democracy being employed to keep the mass of Western Humanity culturally depressed at, or perhaps even below, its pre-industrial and pre-democratic spiritual level . . ."

The consequences of this drive form one of Henry James's major themes in such stories as "The Death of the Lion," "The Coxon Fund," and "The Next Time." These stories deal, as James said, "with the literary life, gathering their motive, in each case, from some noted adventure, some felt embarrassment, some extreme predicament, of the artist enamoured of perfection, ridden by his idea or paying for his sincerity." In "The Next Time"—which will stand for the other stories in its vicinity—a professional novelist tries, year after year, to write a popular novel, but his artistic conscience will not allow him to stoop low enough to please the market. Every year he promises himself that the next time he will really do it. But he doesn't. Instead, he decides to give up the attempt at popularity and abide by the scruple of his imagination. At the end of the story he is working on a novel called *Derogation*:

> The voice of the market had suddenly grown faint and far: he had come back at the last, as people so often do, to one of the moods, the sincerities of his prime. What had happened, I was afterwards satisfied, was that he had quite forgotten whether he generally sold or not. He had merely waked up one morning again in the country of the blue and had stayed there with a good conscience and a great idea. He stayed till death knocked at the gate, for the pen dropped from his

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> hand only at the moment when from sudden failure of the heart his eyes, as he sank back in his chair, closed for ever. *Derogation* is a splendid fragment; it evidently would have been one of his high successes. I am not prepared to say it would have waked up the libraries.

The country of the blue, as R.P. Blackmur has pointed out, is the place of pure imagination, a region set apart from the world in the interests of formal perfection. Whether in James's 'The Next Time' or Stevens's 'The Man with the Blue Guitar', the country of the blue is a place given over to the imagination: while the going is good there, artists are permitted to feel that they can 'reduce the monster to myself,' the monster being the otherwise obdurate reality, intolerably opaque.

But when the going ceases to be good, the creative imagination must take up other burdens. Lionel Trilling has written of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) in this context; he refers to "its strange and terrible message of ambivalence toward the life of civilization":

> It is one of the great points of Conrad's story that Marlow speaks of the primitive life of the jungle not as being noble or charming or even free but as being base and sordid and for that reason compelling: he himself feels quite overtly its dreadful attraction. It is to this devilish baseness that Kurtz has yielded himself, and yet Marlow, although he does indeed treat him with hostile irony, does not find it possible to suppose that Kurtz is anything but a hero of the spirit . . . Is this not the essence of the modern belief about the nature of the artist, the man who goes down into that hell which is the historical beginning of the human soul, a beginning not outgrown but established in humanity as we know it now, preferring the reality of this hell to the bland lies of the civilization that has overlaid it?

Of course the alienation of artists from the society they somehow addressed was established long before the 1890s. Flaubert was prosecuted for the obscenity of *Madame Bovary* in 1857; in the same year, Baudelaire was prosecuted for the offense he committed against public morals in *Les Fleurs du Mal*. But it took many years because such alienation—or, as Pater called it, such antinomianism—was established as a writer's expected, settled relation to society. Antinomianism took several forms. In "The Autumn of the Body" (1898) Yeats spoke of writers "struggling all over Europe . . . against that picturesque and declamatory way of writing, against that 'externality' which a time of scientific and political thought has brought into literature." Yeats offered it as a disability that Shaw had "no true quarrel with his time."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Thomas Mann said of Aestheticism that it was "the first manifestation of the European mind's rebellion against the whole morality of the bourgeois age." Art is beautiful, as Adorno says, "by virtue of its opposition to mere being."

Consider a few occasions in the 1890s. In April 1891, Wilde's *The Picture of Dorian Gray* was published, and the bookseller W.H. Smith refused to carry it, on the grounds that it was a dirty book. In 1893, Arthur Symons published *The Decadent Movement in Literature*. In 1894, the first number of *The Yellow Book* appeared. Ian Fletcher has remarked that "to the sober historian the imposition of Death Duties in 1894 appears more significant than the trials of Oscar Wilde in the following year; the continuous economic depression of 1890-96 than the sputtering history of the Rhymers." It may be true; but the constituents of a cultural decade are not always entirely political and economic. So it is worth mentioning that in 1896, the same W.H. Smith refused to distribute the July number of *The Savoy* because he attributed to Beardsley one of Blake's illustrations—'Antaeus setting down Virgil and Dante upon the Verge of Cocytus'—in an essay by Yeats. A few weeks later the row about Hardy's *Jude the Obscure* was stirred up further by Havelock Ellis's essay on it in *The Savoy* of October 6. In 1898 Mallarmé died at the age of fifty-six. Symons published *The Symbolist Movement in Literature* in 1899. In 1900 Ruskin died at the age of seventy-one. The past seemed a valley of regrets. It became a sign of authenticity to believe that artists had only the future to look to. "The future is what artists are," Wilde claimed.

In "The Tragic Generation" Yeats asked himself what had caused the sinking of so many of his friends into dissipation and despair. It was not poverty: several of his colleagues among the Rhymers of the Cheshire Cheese were well enough off. Yeats wondered whether or not "our form of lyric, our insistence upon emotion which has no relation to any public interest, gathered together overwrought, unstable men." But he noted that some of those writers who went out of their minds had no lyrical gift. Then he speculated that Pater's philosophy as it is expressed in *Marius the Epicurean* was to blame: "it taught us to walk upon a rope tightly stretched through serene air, and we were left to keep our feet upon a swaying rope in a storm." Thinking of Lionel Johnson and Ernest Dowson, Yeats wrote, in the poem "Ego Dominus Tuus" that

> . . . those that love the world serve it in action,
> Grow rich, popular and full of influence,
> And should they paint or write, still it is action:
> The struggle of the fly in marmalade.
> The rhetorician would deceive his neighbours,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> The sentimentalist himself; while art
> Is but a vision of reality.
> What portion in the world can the artist have
> Who has awakened from the common dream
> But dissipation and despair. . . ?

The common dream is the vulgar acceptance of reality in the terms officially prescribed for it, terms insistently positivist, scientific, worldly. Yeats's poem corresponds to the section of "The Tragic Generation" in which he reaches for yet another explanation. Still thinking of his friends and their several tragedies, Yeats divides nineteenth century English poetry into two modes: one of these consists of poets who held to "some propaganda or traditional doctrine to give companionship with their fellows." Browning had his "psychological curiosity," Arnold "his faith in what he described as the best thought of his generation," Tennyson "moral values that were not aesthetic values." But there was another tradition, an antinomian one:

> Coleridge of "The Rime of Ancient Mariner" and "Kubla Khan," and Rossetti in all his writings, made what Arnold has called that "morbid effort," that search for "perfection of thought and feeling, and to unite this to perfection of form," sought this new, pure beauty, and suffered in their lives because of it.

Yeats thought that he and his colleagues in the nineties had more and more "separated certain images and regions of the mind, and that these images grow in beauty as they grow in sterility." And he offered in evidence a few stanzas of Lionel Johnson's poem "The Dark Angel," one of Johnson's acknowledgments of a second self, prince of darkness, the enemy within:

> Dark Angel, with thine aching lust
> To rid the world of penitence:
> Malicious Angel, who still dost
> My soul such subtle violence.

It may be a prejudice on my part to think that if Wilde was the representative figure of the English nineties, Yeats was its most complete witness and critic. "The Tragic Generation" ends with his account of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

attending the first performance of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* in Paris with Arthur Symons on December 10, 1896. He could have understood of it only the little he knew of French and whatever Symons was able to whisper to him. But he divined enough of the play to see in it an image of a turn of the historical gyre he was bound to dread:

> The players are supposed to be dolls, toys, marionettes, and now they are all hopping like wooden frogs, and I can see for myself that the chief personage, who is some kind of King, carries for sceptre a brush of the kind that we use to clean a closet. Feeling bound to support the most spirited party, we have shouted for the play, but that night at the Hotel Corneille I am very sad, for comedy, objectivity, has displayed its growing power once more. I say: 'After Stéphane Mallarmé, after Paul Verlaine, after Gustave Moreau, after Puvis de Chavannes, after our own verse, after all our subtle colour and nervous rhythm, after the faint mixed tints of Conder, what more is possible ? After us the Savage God.'

Years later, in 1936, when he was compiling the *Oxford Book of Modern Verse* and writing an introduction to it, Yeats evidently felt that he could set himself free of his apocalyptic obligation. He had made several attempts to invoke the Savage God. Now, if only for a moment, he could indulge himself in the pleasantry of recalling that "in 1900 everybody got down off his stilts; henceforth nobody drank absinthe with his black coffee; nobody went mad; nobody committed suicide; nobody joined the Catholic church; or if they did I have forgotten." The nineties were over: the next turn of the gyre would find its dire emblem in a barely imaginable rough beast slouching towards Bethlehem to be born.

Igor Webb: The next speaker is Karen Wilkin. She is an art critic and curator and the author, most recently, of a monograph of Cézanne. The title of her paper is "Modernism and Postmodernism in Art and Architecture."

Karen Wilkin: A hundred years ago, Paris was the place to be if you were interested in art that broke traditions. The meticulous idealism of the Academy was still taught, practiced, and displayed in the annual official exhibitions. Beaux Arts elaborations of classical sources were still demanded of architects, but just as the tendrils of Art Nouveau ornament had begun to twine across the façades of Paris buildings, art that set itself in opposition to academic pieties, that we would now call "modernist," was becoming more visible. In 1895, for example, Paul Cézanne had his first

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

one-man show at Ambroise Vollard's new gallery, a substantial miniature retrospective that brought the reclusive fifty-six year old "painter's painter" to the attention of a larger public for the first time. Cézanne would live another eleven years and had still to paint some of his most difficult and challenging pictures, those late accumulations of deliberately placed wedge-shaped strokes, at once insubstantial and acutely evocative of forms, places, and figures. But by 1896, a year after the Vollard exhibition, Cézanne was already engaged with his introspective card players, with yet another series of views of Mont Ste-Victoire, and with some of his most compelling, disquieting portraits. In 1896 Cézanne completed, as well, his celebrated canvas of massive, rock-solid bathers delineated by a firm blue line that seems to carve out space, now in the National Gallery, London.

The same year as the Cézanne show, you could also have seen a large exhibition of paintings by Claude Monet at Durand-Ruel Gallery, including twenty of his Rouen Cathedrals, transubstantiations of an intricately carved Gothic façade into expanses of crusty color, made almost congruent with the surface of the canvas. (In 1896, fourteen of these surprising paintings were shown in New York.) The fifty-five year old Monet was at Giverny, at work on images of the Japanese-style footbridge over his lily-pond and a series of opalescent "mornings on the Seine."

In 1896, Edgar Degas had a large show at Durand-Ruel. No less cantankerous or individual at sixty one, Degas remained technically and formally adventurous, experimenting with photography and having devised a new monotype method for his landscapes. He was devoting his energy mainly to a continuing series of pastels of women at their toilette, pictures whose ferocious intensity, dazzling color, and oddly simultaneous intimacy and detachment are still surprising. He was probably making sculptures, too, as he did on and off until the end of his life in 1917, improvisatory images whose transitional, unstable postures challenge the entire inherited tradition of classical sculpture. At the same time, an even more radical challenge to sculptural standards was nearing completion in the studio of the fifty-five year old Rodin. After almost five years of intense experimentation, in 1896 he was close to being ready to cast his monument to Balzac, with its rearing hulk of swathed body and massive head—an enigmatic, turbulent monolith that was greeted with horror.

Also in 1896, after almost two years of wrangling and resistance, the French government at last agreed to display forty paintings by Cézanne, Degas, Manet, Monet, Pissarro, Renoir, and Sisley in the Luxembourg (the modern art museum of the day). The paintings had been bequeathed by the late Gustave Caillebotte, an amateur in the truest sense of the word who befriended the Impressionists, painted alongside them, and bought their work; at the beginning of 1897, his legacy was finally put on display. Of the artists in this disputed collection, all except Manet, who died in

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

1883, were working productively and with great originality. But they were no longer young radicals in 1896, and although they were still regarded as daring, outré, and forward-looking, their art attracted a significant, if small, following of international collectors. Impressionism also attracted a larger following of admirers, particularly among artists. By 1896, "the new painting," as Impressionism first was called, was well on its way to becoming a vast, liberating international movement, as widespread and pervasive as the Gothic style had been in its day and carrying with it, as Gothic naturalism did, a sense of freshness and newness.

In the late 1880s and early '90s, younger artists had already begun to challenge Impressionist ideals. Symbolists, such as Paul Gauguin and Vincent Van Gogh, replaced the realist aspirations of their seniors with an effort to put color and imagery wholly in the service of mood and emotion, while their younger colleague Georges Seurat, at the opposite end of the emotional spectrum, struggled to translate perceptions into economical forms, dispassionately evoked by "scientifically" disposed touches of pigment. But by 1896 the ranks of the Post-Impressionists had been thinned. Gauguin, aged forty-eight, had returned to Tahiti the previous year and would remain there until his death. Van Gogh and Seurat had both died as young men in their thirties, Van Gogh in 1890, Seurat in 1891. As for the next generation, whose names have become synonymous with modernist art: in 1896, Henri Matisse, who at twenty seven had been painting for six years, undertook his most ambitious work to date, a large canvas of a dinner table laden with crystal, wine carafes, fruit bowls, and candelabra, with an attendant servant. It is a labored, glittering picture that is at once inherently conservative and points to the most startling of his later concerns. In 1896, a twenty year old Brancusi was still in Romania, the star pupil of a traditional academy of Arts and Crafts. Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque were teenagers, Picasso absorbing traditional academic art training and Braque, to the despair of his family, failing to be good at anything at school, including drawing.

On this side of the Atlantic in 1896, modernist painting had not yet taken root, which is not to deny that first-rate artists were at work here—the realists Thomas Eakins and Winslow Homer, the mystical Albert Pinkham Ryder, for example. A tame, domesticated version of American Impressionism had begun to flourish, although its "real" practitioners, artists who participated in the struggles of "the new painters," the expatriates James McNeill Whistler and Mary Cassat, were still in Europe. Except for a few enlightened collectors, American taste was conservative. If you could afford it, you had your portrait painted by John Singer Sargent and you collected old masters. An adventurous generation of American painters was still in the future. Marsden Hartley was nineteen and had just begun weekly art classes in Cleveland; John Marin was twenty-six, working

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

without enthusiasm as an architect and painting loose but conventional watercolors. Stuart Davis was three.

In this country as in Europe, Beaux Arts grandeur still dominated architecture, but there were glimmers of an exciting new way of thinking about buildings. The skyscraper was a new phenomenon, both result and cause of the way the massive masonry piling of traditional architecture was yielding to a new, light method of constructing with iron and steel. Forward-looking architects such as Louis Sullivan in the U.S. and Jugendstil or Art Nouveau practitioners in Europe had begun to explore these possibilities, as well as to rethink the role and form of ornament, substituting motifs drawn from nature and inspired by Japanese art for the codified orders inherited from the classical past. All of this can be described as modernism of a kind, although distinct from Modern Movement architecture (the equivalent perhaps of abstract painting) which had its birth much later, in the 1920s.

Throughout this rapid and necessarily superficial survey of the art world of 1896, I have used "modernism" as though it were a universally understood term with a generally agreed upon significance. I hope you have had no doubts about what I meant. But, despite the currency of its usage, the defining characteristics of modernism are still being debated, even if you restrict the question to a single discipline, such as the visual arts.

Clement Greenberg, concentrating on observable formal characteristics, posited a notion of modernism as a process of self-criticism. According to his model, each art form gradually purged itself of everything not essential to it; or as he put it, each art restricted itself to its "unique and proper competence," which, it quickly emerged, "coincided with all that was unique to the nature of its medium." Painting jettisoned narrative as the province of literature; it abandoned the illusion of three-dimensional form as the proper province of sculpture. Traditional realistic art, Greenberg declared, "had dissembled the medium, using art to conceal art. Modernism used art to call attention to art." How? By forgoing the fiction of illusionistic forms, textures, and space, to emphasize instead the undeniable fact that a picture is made of stuff arranged on a flat surface. Sculpture, for Greenberg, was more problematic; since by its very nature, sculpture is unignorably, physically there, it had less to discard, and in fact, a rethinking of sculptural possibilities—the substitution of open constructed form for the carved or modeled monolith—did not occur until the late 1920s, not coincidentally soon after Modern Movement architecture offered a definitive alternative to traditional masonry construction.

According to Greenberg's model, the ultimate modernist picture would be a flat expanse of a single unmodulated color, something he admitted as a possibility, although he denied it would necessarily be a work

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

of art—which has not stopped a great many serious, gifted, powerful painters from apparently trying see how much they can leave out of a picture and still have something expressive and interesting to look at. (I am oversimplifying, of course.) Greenberg discussed architecture very little, but his reductionist model certainly works for the Modern Movement's fierce antipathy to ornament, its insistence on the revelation of structural means for their own sake, its much-quoted dictums "less is more" and "form follows function."

Greenberg was generalizing from his experience, describing what he had seen, not prescribing what he thought modernist art should be. That his reading of modernist painting should be reduced to the single word "flatness," chiefly by his detractors, probably has to do with the persuasiveness of the metaphor he offers for his observations. In a well-known passage, Greenberg compares our experience of traditional art to looking through a proscenium into a stage. "Modernism has rendered this stage shallower and shallower until now its backdrop has become the same as its curtain, which has now become all that the painter has to work on."

Social historians of art tend to see the formal manifestations Greenberg observed as a response to a particular experience of modernity, to the emerging phenomenon of life in an industrialized, increasingly literate, increasingly middle class world with new kinds of spectacles and technology. Some take issue with his notion of modernism as a quest for narrow certainties. For T.J. Clark, for example, modernist painting's substitution of discontinuous, flattened passages of color for the smooth, unbroken transitions of illusionist modeling has nothing to do with a search for a "pure" art faithful to the inherent characteristics of its medium, but instead reflects a growing taste for uncertainty, for the disjunctive. Clark doesn't deny the increasing flatness of modernist paintings, but questions the meaning of the phenomenon, asking, for example, why Parisian painters in the second half of the ninteenth century should suddenly become receptive to the compositional strategies suggested by Japanese and popular French prints of the day, instead of continuing to regard them as curiosities that had nothing to do with the goals of painting as preached by the official Academy.

Michael Fried offers yet another model of modernism having to do not with flatness, but with frank revelation of material means, process, conception, and even intention.

There's general agreement that modernism is an act of rejection, not of the great tradition of Western art, but of the nineteenth century Academy's debased version of past excellences. Part of modernism's opposition to the Academy, with its stringent rules and codified standards, took the form of a new inclusiveness. Manet's generation drew on sources ranging from the Renaissance to eighteenth century prints openly and with

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

utter freedom. Manet himself, in particular, combinined these varied references in extraordinary new conflations. Themes drawn from modern life, including the painter's studio, replaced the Academy's high-minded mythological and historical subject matter; eventually, the mere fact of seeing—and later of feeling—came to replace explicit narrative entirely. Artists increasingly paid attention to non-western art and to the vernacular as sources—those Japanese woodblocks and Epinal prints mentioned earlier. Later, African and Oceanic sculpture, catalogue illustrations, newspapers, advertising art, and a host of other things deliberately chosen for their lack of High Art associations were used both as sources of images and as material inclusions. Witness Brancusi's synthesis of Romanian peasant carving, African, and Khmer sculpture; the Cubists' newspaper collages; Picasso and Gonzalez's sculptures constructed with the same materials and methods used to make automobiles; and—closer to the present—the Pop artists' assimilation of the subject matter and formal language of advertising art. That inclusiveness eventually extended to the unseen, to an interior landscape of dream images and wordless, inchoate emotion.

Much of what I have been itemizing has its equivalent in a good deal of the art of 1996. Images from the past, from a dazzling variety of worldwide cultures, and from what used to be dismissed as kitsch, the emblems of popular culture, are commonplace in current work, freely—at times, it seems, randomly—chosen and even more freely recombined. Methods and materials associated with industry, handicraft, mass entertainment, the vernacular, and the sheerly expedient are routinely made the stuff of present day art, along with self-reference, layering of allusions, and deliberate transgression of accepted norms. All of these have their roots in modernism, even in the art of 1896, but there are important differences. The most obvious, of course, is the absence of a true avant-garde. Far-outness is highly valued in contemporary art. It is hardly news to observe that in 1996, outrageousness is received as warmly as academic virtuosity was in 1896, and similarly goes a long way to ensuring a successful career. This has encouraged aspiring artists to aim, quite consciously, at novelty for the sake of novelty, not at the intensity or resonance or excellence or power or whatever you wish to call it that their predecessors—reluctant innovators, all—aspired to. Of course, the whole notion of excellence, which declares one work of art to be superior to another, is itself deeply suspect in 1996, so that it may be wholly inappropriate to suggest that excellence might be considered a worthy goal.

There are other striking differences, mainly differences of attitude, manifest in present day art, which are so acute that they have given rise to the convenient notion of post-modernism. Whether post-modernism is simply a sub-species of modernism can still be argued, but what is undeniable is that a deep pessimism and a new and pervasive sense of irony, of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

the parodic, has replaced the sense of deep engagement of the adventurous art of a century ago. Paintings in 1996 frequently have surfaces as anonymous as machine-made objects or, conversely, seem to have been made by the wholly unskilled. It's as though current practitioners not only reject the possibility of "privileging," in the currently fashionable word, a particular work of art or kind of art, a particular culture or material, but they don't quite believe in the significance of what they are engaged in. Disclaimers are built-in, a self-aware disengagement that is closely related to the camp sensibility that was brought into the realm of academic discourse thirty years ago by Susan Sontag. (The blurring of gender distinctions, with special attention granted to female and homosexual sensibilities, are frequently cited hallmarks of post-modernism, often set in opposition to the presumed "patriarchal" stance of modernism.) "It has all been done already, so don't expect us to take it seriously" is an implied subtext of post-modernist art.

The radical art of a century ago was wholehearted, not cynical, "straight" (admittedly in all current senses of the term, which as I have just noted, some would argue is a problem). It was based on a fundamental belief in the potency of the visual and in the ability of the materials of visual art to carry profound meaning. The certainties and harmony of the Academy were supplanted by ambiguity and tension, but even these discomfiting elements were tied to material presence. Much of the power and the modernity of Cézanne's paintings, for example, obtain from their inherent contradiction. His celebrated method of rendering form with patches of warm and cool color creates a wholly convincing sense of bulk and mass, but at the same time, his deliberate placement of those patches forcibly reminds us of the flatness of the canvas and the artifice of painting itself. His disjunctive touches, his slow accretion of carefully orchestrated tonalities makes us recapitulate his fierce scrutiny of the motif, so that the disembodied act of seeing becomes as physical and tangible as the repetitive pats of pigment. Process, as much as result, affects our response.

Present day artists' lack of trust in the materials of their art to be expressive or communicative (which, of course, doesn't happen automatically) is extended to the viewer as well. Present theory often assumes that only someone with background, experiences, and proclivities identical to the artist's can grasp his or her intentions, which means that the artist is the best interpreter of his own work. To ensure "correct" understanding, works of art come fully bolstered with explicit programs and directive texts; text itself can become the work of art. No one seems to find anything lacking in art that remains emotionally and aesthetically inert unless explicated, but art devoid of a program that can be put into words is deemed to be empty. (That artists and critics habitually use "information"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to refer to the components of present day works of art is, I would argue, an indicator of the "privileging" of verbal over visual experience.)

Yet even this has precedents. The self-conscious "bad boy" art that was a response to the carnage and social upheavals of World War I—Dada, in general, and Marcel Duchamp, in particular—have been claimed as ancestors by post-modernists.

Present day hostility to art that addresses the viewer through visual phenomena *sans* text has its origins in Duchamp's antipathy for what he called "retinal painting," which he described as a "drug." The assumption that such painting is inherently empty is traceable to his mistrust of the visual. Duchamp's declared mission, he said, was "to put painting once again at the service of the mind," "to carry the mind of the spectator toward other regions more verbal." How? By dematerializing art. Dada, Duchamp explained, wished to defy the physical character of painting, to return it to the realm of idea. The ramifications of these notions in conceptual art are obvious. What's new in 1996 is their transformation into paintings (often full of appropriated imagery) that, paradoxically, are no less in the realm of ideas than Duchamp's most arbitrarily chosen ready-made—paintings about the idea of painting, rather than about painting itself. Gerhardt Richter's canvases of the past few years, for example, which look at first glance like curiously thin recapitulations of gestural abstraction, have in fact little to do with that tradition. The *appearance* of painting has been substituted for the newspaper photos and color charts—versions of Duchamp's ready-mades, once again—that were Richter's early points of reference. It's debatable whether Richter is signaling the death of painting or its rebirth in ironic post-modernist terms, by reducing the juicy, wet-into-wet paint handling associated with deeply emotional abstraction to a kind of conventionalized wallpaper, its material drama eliminated, homogenized as it would be by mechanical reproduction. The sculptural equivalent, less ambiguous, but similar in inspiration, would be Jeff Koons's slick reproductions of mass-produced toys or his monstrously enlarged kitsch figurines of popular culture celebrities, grotesque images of ready-made subjects, expensively manufactured by someone other than the artist.

For modernists in 1896, the experience of art was bound up with physical presence: with specific issues of scale, surface, material reality. Engravings could reproduce generalities of composition and, if they were very good, translate tonality and color massing into black and white, but they were never seen as a substitute for direct encounters with paintings and sculptures. For post-modernists in 1996, raised on a proliferation of images unimaginable a century ago, works of art can exist primarily as disembodied simulacra—photos, projected slides, video images, color reproductions—whose physical existence and apparent worth are no different from any other order of visual phenomenon. The scale, surface, texture, and context of the images in this

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

mental collection are variable and subject to manipulation. Images themselves can be appropriated at will, reproduced expediently or mechanically, and deployed not for their physical characteristics, but as emblematic "signs," visual catchwords meant to be recognized, but not necessarily studied or appreciated for their inherent material or formal qualities.

There are exceptions, of course; painters and sculptors claimed by post-modernism whose work, quite the opposite, depends on the brute physical expressiveness of unexpected materials (sometimes with powerful effect, sometimes, it can be argued, at the expense of anything else). Two examples are Richard Deacon's early constructions made of linoleum, cloth, and leather that forced reconsideration of sculptural notions of hard and soft, of mass and the absence of mass, and Sigmar Polke's orchestrations not only of a range of materials and applications, but of painting conventions themselves.

More than two decades ago, the ironic post-modernist sensibility declared itself unequivocally in architecture, more unequivocally than it had in painting and sculpture, just as the reductive, self-referential model of modernism proposed by Greenberg declared itself clearly in the spare buildings of Bauhaus architects and their descendants. (That many of the obvious candidates for the title of "post-modernist"—Robert Venturi, Charles Moore, Michael Graves, and Stanley Tigerman—usually deny this affiliation may be another manifestation of irony.) It was a largely American phenomenon, spurred by Venturi's seminal book *Complexity and Contradiction in Architecture*, published in 1966, which announced a new evaluation of the legacy of traditional architecture and provoked a new inclusiveness of form and reference at odds with the purism of the Modern Movement.

Like their colleagues among painters and sculptors, architects responsive to Venturi's ideas treated the past as a kind of grab bag, freely "appropriating" ornament, imagery, plans, and typologies from traditional masonry building types, grafting these dislocated references onto relatively straightforward modern-day constructions to signal formality, seriousness, solidity, and the like in a kind of shorthand. Sometimes the resulting collage is subtle, evocative, witty, and reassuring, but when the scale of the referential fragments is exaggerated or miniaturized—as it is in cartoon-drawing—their freight of time-honored associations is undermined and the whole enterprise degenerates into parody, quite deliberately, as it often does in post-modernist art. Even the disembodied, anti-materialist quality of post-modernist painting has its architectural equivalent. The material substance and three-dimensional detail of the architecture parodied—or appropriated—by post-modernism rarely finds its way into post-modernist buildings. Usually they are more convincing as drawings. Built, they can seem papery and insubstantial, like stage-sets or Potemkin villages. I'm not the first to note that the Disney corporation has been an avid consumer of the idiom—cartoon architecture, for a cartoon empire.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That would be a depressing paradigm for the end of this century, but while post-modernism—if indeed it exists—continues to dominate the most visible painting, sculpture, photography, video, and installation art in 1996, post-modernism in architecture is a thing of the past, as circumscribed and defined as orthodox Modern Movement architecture. It has had a salutary effect, however, provoking a vigorous, inventive reconsideration of modernism and even of neo-classicism among some of the most interesting of current practitioners. Unlike the joke-loving post-modernists or the severe, high-minded heirs of the Modern Movement, these architects often strive for lyricism and sensuality, or expressionism and tension, in both forms and materials, within a modernist vocabulary. It is ironic—a characteristic of our age, it seems—that they are seen to be doing something worthwhile and new by re-exploring modernism, while present-day painters and sculptors who adhere to modernist ideals are usually ignored or dismissed as hopelessly out of date. Richter's brand of conceptualized, detached abstraction is considered innovative; serious, "felt" abstract painting is considered old-fashioned. There are plenty of old-fashioned artists around, many of them first-rate, working seriously and with great determination, although you won't see their work in the salon of the 1990s, the Whitney Biennial, or in modish galleries. In their opposition to the novelty and cynicism demanded of "official" art of 1996, these underground artists constitute a new avant-garde. We can only await with curiosity what the millennium will bring.

Igor Webb: Thank you, Karen. We will now hear from Steven Marcus. He is the George Delacorte Professor in the Humanities at Columbia University and the Associate Editor of *Partisan Review*. He will be discussing "Utopias and Dystopias at the End of the Centuries." Afterwards we will discuss the panelists' papers.

Steven Marcus: I should like to begin with a favorite passage, which also possesses the supplementary advantage of being well-known.

> "The rule is, jam to-morrow and jam yesterday—but never jam *to-day*."
>
> "It *must* come sometimes to 'jam to-day,'" Alice objected.
>
> "No, it can't," said the Queen. "It's jam every other day: to-day isn't any *other* day, you know."
>
> "I don't understand you," said Alice. "It's dreadfully confusing!"
>
> "That's the effect of living backwards," the Queen said kindly: "it always makes one a little giddy at first—"
>
> "Living backwards!" Alice repeated in great astonishment. "I never heard of such a thing!"

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> "—but there's one great advantage in it, that one's memory works both ways."
>
> "I'm sure *mine* only works one way," Alice remarked. I can't remember things before they happen."
>
> "It's a poor sort of memory that only works backwards," the Queen remarked.
>
> "What sort of things do *you* remember best?" Alice ventured to ask.
>
> "Oh, things that happened the week after next," the Queen replied in a careless tone.

This pertinent interchange comes, of course, from *Through the Looking Glass, and What Alice Found There*, which was first published in 1872. Ends of centuries, at least of recent date, tend to bring about certain modes of imagining. One of them is caught up adroitly in my epigraphic opening: the magical centurial numbers seem to incite in most of us, no matter how secular or rational we claim to be, impulses to remember the future. And success at this insuppressible impulse at forecasting through memory is statistically only slightly less probable than historians' preoccupations with predicting the past. "Even looking backward," Conor Cruise O'Brien has recently noted, "requires a lot of guesswork." Moreover, both behaviors are nourished at the same inexhaustible sources.

One of the forms that such fanciful excursions take is that of the utopia. Utopias have indeed a very long and complex history in our culture alone, as the immense scholarly literature devoted to their evolution and analysis amply testifies. Nevertheless, the endings of the last two centuries before our own, to pull up short at what for me is a barely manageable interval of time, have worked with extraordinary effect to stimulate thinking of a Utopian kind; and thinking or imagining of a utopian character, it is my minimalist hypothesis, tends regularly (though not inevitably or in the same person) to generate its counterpart and complement—imaginations of a dystopian world, society, universe, or economy of things. Inside of most utopias, it appears, there are dystopias scrambling to get out.

At least this circumstance appears pretty clearly to have been the case for the centuries that I have adverted to, although the end of each of them was distinctively different if not singular—we cannot at this point recollect how the remaining years of the present century and the millennium ahead of us have turned out, nor on the other hand foretell the past that will then occur. The end of the eighteenth century, however, it is now safe to say, brought forth the most strenuous effort in human history until that time to fabricate Utopia in the midst of the actual present. As a young adherent and partisan of that event bore witness:

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Bliss was it in that dawn to be alive,
But to be young was very Heaven! O times
In which the meagre, stale, forbidding ways
Of custom, law, and statute, took at once
The attraction of a country in romance!
When Reason seemed the most to assert her rights!
When most intent on making of herself
A prime enchantress—to assist the work,
Which then was going forward in her name!
Not favoured spots alone, but the whole Earth,
The beauty wore of promise—that which sets . . .
The budding rose above the rose full blown.
What temper at the prospect did not wake
To happiness unthought of? The inert
Were roused, and lively natures rapt away!
They who had fed their childhood upon dreams,
. . . who had made
All powers of swiftness, subtlety, and strength
Their ministers,—who in lordly wise had stirred
Among the grandest objects of the sense,
And dealt with whatsoever they found there
As if they had within some lurking right
To wield it;—they, too, who of gentle mood
Had watched all gentle motions, and to these
Had fitted their own thoughts, schemers more mild,
And in the region of their peaceful selves;—
Now was it that *both* found, the meek and lofty
Did both find helpers to their hearts' desire,
And stuff at hand, plastic as they could wish,—
Were called upon to exercise their skill,
Not in Utopia,—subterranean fields,—
Or some secreted island, Heaven knows where!
But in the very world, which is the world
Of all of us,—the place where, in the end,
We find our happiness, or not at all!

The Prelude (1850 edn., Bk.XI, ll.105-144.)

That of course was Wordsworth recollecting his youthful experiences in the French Revolution and remaining loyal to his sense of the validity of the visionary power embodied in its collective social imagination even after he had become an old and extremely conservative poet laureate. The French Revolution, of course, had been preceded and was subsequently followed throughout the nineteenth century by a legion of utopian and dystopian representations in a stunning diversity of modes and genres. From imaginations of a new social cosmos, such as those put forth by

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Utopian Socialists in France, Germany, England, and America, to systematic schemes of an envisioned future such as those composed by St. Simon, Fourier, and Comte, to the less specified but no less grandiose Marxist anticipations of a reborn, reconstituted, and revolutionized society, in which pre-history had come to an end and human history would really and truly begin, the nineteenth century was a fertile seedbed for Utopian divinations and their complements—in philosophy, in social theory, in various narrative and fictional forms—many of them often running together in works of singular generic variety, and occasionally of singular oddity as well.

I shall take the present opportunity to refer to a few particular variations upon the utopian imagination that were composed toward the end of the last century and then to comment very briefly on a minute fraction of what has been happening so far at the end of ours, which happens as well to coincide with the end of the second millennium of the present era.

To my mind one of the more enduring and interesting of these utopian representations is William Morris's *News from Nowhere*. This work was itself a counter-vision and was brought forth, as utopias often are, by someone else's fantasy of the future—in this instance the American writer Edward Bellamy's *Looking Backward 2000—1887*, which was published in 1888, and became at once an extremely popular and much-discussed, imitated, continued, reviled and refuted cultural article. Bellamy's projection of Boston in the year 2000 focused upon a society managed by state socialism, one that was fully industrialized and meticulously routinized from "the cradle to the grave," everyone between the ages of twenty-one and forty-five being compulsory members of the "Industrial Army." "The nation was organized as the one great business corporation in which all other corporations were absorbed; it became the one capitalist in the place of all other capitalists, the sole employer, the final monopoly. . . ." Cash money has given way to universal credit cards, and piped-in Muzak fills the general air. The nation state has been replaced by a world state, and Boston figures largely as an instantiation of what is taking place throughout.

Morris was both vexed and slightly horrified by what he called "this cockneyfied paradise." Following the impetus of his recoiling from Bellamy's vision he began to write and publish the *Chapters from a Utopian Romance* that ultimately became *News from Nowhere*, which was published in book form in 1891. Morris's utopia has been extensively commented upon, and my remarks do not aspire to comprehensive or superseding interpretation. But a number of the more notable and engrossing considerations entailed by this narrative are to be found precisely in its problematicalities—in its cross-currents, contradictions, dubieties, uncertainties, and inconclusiveness, and in its peculiarities of tone. Such irregularities and disjunctures form part of the work's abiding interest and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

deep authenticity.

Morris was himself simultaneously a disciple of Karl Marx and John Ruskin. He endeavored to be both a loyal socialist and communist and someone who hated machines and the culture of industrialism so deeply that he was driven to become pre-eminent among the founders and leaders of the Arts and Crafts movement of the 1880s, and hence the godfather of Art Nouveau, Jugendstil, and ultimately the Bauhaus movement. And Morris did in point of fact manage to be both at once; he was able to contain within himself the opposing tidal pulls, tensions, and contradictions of his major commitments and embody them in his work. The Nowhere that Morris's narrator, who is of course himself, awakens to, in the dream vision that makes up the body of the narrative, is the London of the year 2102—one hundred and twelve years later than Bellamy's Boston, and a very different proposition from either it or the London of the 1890s. It is a type of communist-anarchist paradise. There is no government apparatus or national state; political institutions have simply withered away without the doctrinal intervention of the dictatorship of the proletariat. There is no money, no exploitation, no private property to speak of, and in some indefeasible sense no work. Work has in fact become play, amusement, pleasure, arts and crafts, hobbies, and exercise for keeping fit. In making the problem of work the central issue in his utopia, Morris had touched upon what was and still remains an intractable problem. It does not bear with particular salience on the mature or late Marx, but it is excellent early Marx, since it situates the matter of alienated labor as the critical locus of contention and meaning for any society of the future.

Moreover, the problem of alienated labor, as we have come to apprehend it since, is not merely a problem that pertains to a capitalist society, or a market-driven economy of private ownership; it is an equally besetting trouble for any industrial society, including those in which there is something like state or common ownership. A disalienated human existence, in Morris's view, could only be brought about in a deindustrialized world, a world in which mandatory industrial labor had been abolished; in other words, it had to be something like Eden again, a home regained, a world in which work was also and equally play and art. And indeed the people of Nowhere have appropriately regressed, and, in this recollected enactment of what will happen in the century after next, most of them have become child-like in a reattained innocence. Thinking has ceased to be perplexed or complex, and almost no one muddles his head anymore with "those idiotic old books about political economy" (including Marx, one must suppose, upon whose texts Morris himself complained that he was breaking his own cranium). In fact books in general are dying out, the "plague of book-making" has passed, and people are ceasing to read. The subtitle of *News from Nowhere* is *An Epoch of Rest*, and in the implied restlessness

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

by which the America of the present and future was driven, and to which the English industrial nineteenth century had, in Morris's view, also fatally succumbed—and of which Morris's own compulsively restless life of incessant toil was itself a dramatic symptom—the malady of alienated labor finds one of its most poignant displaced expressions.

Nevertheless, a socialist-communist-anarchist society whose inhabitants or citizens are almost universally happy is perforce a world of plenty; how is that plenty achieved? It is achieved, one has reluctantly to say, by cheating. Nowhere has apparently been deindustrialized, if not post-industrialized; money and profit have been banished, and whatever is produced is for "genuine use"; still, to produce even for genuine use requires work of nearly every conceivable variety. How is that work accomplished? Old Hammond, who lives in the disused British Museum and is the repository of the history that almost everyone else has forgotten how to foretell, informs the narrator: "All work which would be irksome to do by hand is done by immensely improved machinery; and in all work which it is a pleasure to do by hand machinery is done without." This is the equivalent, I believe, of sneaking back in through the rear door the onerous problem that one has shoved out through the front. And this bit of innocuous double dealing is compounded later on, when the narrator is contemplating some cargo-carrying barges on the Thames that are moving along "without any means of propulsion visible to me." He is told that these are "force-barges," and that vehicles are moved by land and water with equal ease by such means. He then reflects: "I understood pretty well that these 'force vehicles' had taken the place of our old steam-power carrying; but I took good care not to ask any questions about them, as I knew well enough . . . that I should never be able to understand how they were worked . . . so I merely said, 'Yes, of course, I understand.'" This mysterious source of power, it is clearly implied, has been inherited from the pre-revolutionary world; it is apparently inexhaustible and cannot be understood by the narrator alone but, one suspects, by the users as well—and it is, to be sure, the equivalent of magically perfected and decontaminated nuclear power.

Rebel against and resistor of the modern industrial world as he was, Morris nonetheless remains in these narrative sleights of hand within the mainstream of the Western tradition; the recapturing and reanimating of the values and life-enhancing activities of the pre-capitalist and pre-industrial worlds are to be achieved only through the attainment of a higher measure of mastery over nature and the conscious deployment of its harnessed powers by human agents toward human ends. Indeed, the transparent tomfoolery of these fumbling and off-handedly improvised efforts to deal with what he has himself identified as an obdurately deep-seated problem of any historically advanced Western society inadvertently reveal the Victorian earnestness of Morris's undertaking.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

But there are other occasions of dubiety and interruption in *Nowhere*. One of these focuses upon the problems that attach to sexual love. Not only does sexuality continue to be an untamed, irrational source of conflict, but "perversity and self-will" in connection with sexual relations remain, remarks Old Hammond, "commoner than some of our moralists think." Unhappy unions occur not uncommonly, and the only homicide in the book takes place as the result of a sexual dispute. But Morris is too intelligent a person and too much of a writer to claim that the irrational and the problematic in Utopia would be reduced or remain confined to the sphere of private life. Throughout *News from Nowhere*, there recurs a kind of paradigmatic scene. It first appears very early on, when the narrator and his young guide, Dick, are having breakfast on the first morning in the new world. There enters a splendid-looking man, handsomely dressed in golden cloth, whose name is Henry Johnson, but who calls himself, and is called by everyone else, Boffin, after the immortal Golden Dustman, Noddy Boffin, in Dickens's *Our Mutual Friend*. Boffin is one of Dickens's late mythological characters, who has been a dustman, or garbage collector, all his life, has inherited a great fortune in a mountainous garbage dump, and is the beneficiary of the modern economy of turning waste (including excrement) into money, fortune, and gold. Johnson is himself a garbage collector, who literalizes the gold in his dress, but who also, as his name suggests, has a weakness; as Dick explains to the narrator, Johnson/Boffin spends "his time in writing reactionary novels, and is very proud of getting the local colour right . . . and as he thinks you come from some forgotten corner of the earth, where people are unhappy, and consequently interesting to a story-teller, he thinks he might get some information out of you."

The interesting, the unhappy, and the individualized all tend to go together, as Tolstoy had already observed. The end of history does not produce, even in imagination and theory, an interesting world. As Clara, Dick's formerly estranged wife, although no malcontent like Boffin, asks:

> How is it that though we are so interested with our life for the most part, yet when people take to writing poems or painting pictures, they seldom deal with our modern life, or if they do, take good care to make their poems or pictures unlike that life? Are we not good enough to paint ourselves? How is it that we find the dreadful times of the past so interesting to us—in pictures and poetry?

This note of querulous or plaintive doubt is raised at intervals throughout the narrative. On the way up the Thames, the principal characters meet

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

an old man who has a beautiful granddaughter with whom the narrator falls in love. This aged person is known as a "grumbler," and his particular beef is the already insinuated complaint that life in Nowhere is not interesting. Since all competition in Utopia has been abolished, he wonders whether existence has not become less brisk and lively. "You see," he says to the narrator, "I have read not a few books of the past days, and certain *they* are much more alive than those which are written now; and good sound unlimited competition was the condition under which they were written. . . . There is a spirit of adventure in them, and signs of a capacity to extract good out of evil which our literature quite lacks now. . . ." And despite the reproval of his lovely granddaughter and her contemporaries, he persists in his perversity: "Well, for my part," he avers, "I like reading a good old book with plenty of fun in it, like Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*. Why don't you write books like that now? Ask that question of your Bloomsbury sage." It is part of Morris's admirable and uninflectedly simple integrity that questions such as this simply don't get answered, or that the answers offered to them by various characters are transparently inadequate.

In addition to all these there is the intense plangency and sadness of the entire work; there has never been a more elegiac utopia. It is as if Morris were not only saying farewell to his life (though he was to live for five more years), to his age (he was born just before Victoria ascended to the throne) and civilization, and to the momentous century. But it is also as if it were being revealed to Morris that inside of every utopian vision there are dystopian intimations, hints of schematic incompleteness, soundings about systems and about presumption.

At the very same time that Morris was writing *News from Nowhere*, George Gissing was writing his best novel and the most important, unmitigated dystopia of the end of the nineteenth century. *New Grub Street* is an anti-utopia representing the point of view of the new literary marketplace, the exploding world of mass commercial journalism and literature and the thorough commodification in the society of the time of literate and literary culture, writers, and the new mass audience of readers. One of the characters, an altogether irreproachable hack writer who happens to be a woman, wonders whether she is going to be replaced by an inanimate object: "A few days ago her startled eye had caught an advertisement in the newspaper, headed 'Literary Machine'; had it then been invented at last, some automaton to supply the place of such poor creatures as herself, to turn out books and articles?"

She slaves away at her writing in the Reading Room of the British Museum, that same space in which Marx had bookwormed his way through endless parliamentary papers toward revolution, and in which the narrator of *News from Nowhere* is told at great length the entire history of

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

that revolution and how the new world came into being. But here in Gissing that space has become hell, a prison, a madhouse, and a dystopian panopticon (as well as a factory for writing), all at the same time.

> The fog grew thicker; she looked up at the windows beneath the dome and saw that they were a dusky yellow. Then her eye discerned an official walking along the upper gallery, and in pursuance of her grotesque humour, her mocking misery, she likened him to a black, lost soul, doomed to wander in an eternity of vain research along endless shelves. Or again, the readers who sat here at these radiating lines of desks, what were they but hapless flies caught in a huge web, its nucleus the great circle of the Catalogue? Darker, darker. From the towering wall of volumes seemed to emanate visible motes, intensifying the obscurity; in a moment the book-lined circumference of the room would be but a featureless prison-limit.

It is not the end of the world, or of capitalism, or of history, but it certainly is the end of some kind of human possibility, and this work too is written from the bifurcated consciousness of a great phase of cultural and social history coming to an unexpected climax which at the same time marks its immanent obliteration or decline.

The third and last representative from the end of the last century that I should like summarily to refer to is H.G. Wells's *The Time Machine* (1895). The claim this text makes upon our immediate interest attaches in part to the circumstance that it contains an apparent utopia that only momentarily conceals a deep dystopian reality. As the Time Traveller reviews fast forward on his temporal bicycle to the year 802, 701, he is also forecasting backward, or retrogressing, as the sequence of numbers in the specified date at once suggests. The world he finds himself in is Marxian and anti-Marxian at the same time, as it is equally Darwinian and post-Darwinian as well. The society of the delicate, refined, and apparently aristocratic Eloi is more or less communistic; it is also Darwinian in the sense that in it the human species has been biologically modified. Correlatively, the other species of the future, the Morlocks who live underground and tend machines, is composed of the evolutionary descendants of the nineteenth-century industrial working classes. But in a connected series of reversals, we learn that the Eloi are also fin de siècle aesthetes and biological decadents if not degenerates, and that the subterranean Morlocks breed, serve, herd, tend, and care for the Eloi because what were once the reigning social classes have become the domesticated animals which are the chief item in the diet of the former proletarians. Both sides have been dealt rotten hands by history and evolution, and when the Time Traveller cycles

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

still further into the future, humanity has become extinct altogether, and has been supplanted by a race of giant crabs; and these in turn disappear after thirty million years, and the planet is left to liverworts, lichens, and ice, and finally to unbroken entropic stillness, coldness, and darkness.

In short, evolution and progress have parted company for good, as they have in other of Wells's "Scientific Romances," as he called them, alluding in part to Morris's *Utopian Romance*, while differing in considerable measure from Morris. Wells's utopian/dystopian narratives, in which the genre of modern science fiction was virtually inaugurated, remain highly readable, and some of them are puzzlingly and often playfully complex, but when he directed his attention towards sober, secular prophecy in his so-called "sociological" works, such as *Anticipations of the Reaction of Mechanical and Scientific Progress upon Human Life and Thought* (1902) or *A Modern Utopia* (1905), his writings and speculations became much more period-bound and constrained by his quasi-religious commitment to belief in a world run by a hierarchy of engineers, technologists, and a range of other scientists and "experts." Nevertheless, part of the lasting power of these late-nineteenth century fictional worlds is that they are set off against a background, or are situated within a context, created by centuries of Utopian thinking, and in particular by the multitude of utopian prospects created throughout the Enlightenment and afterwards, right up to the end of the nineteenth century itself.

If we choose to take a momentary glimpse at our current situation from the perspective generated by this context, we can make out something like the following situation. The short twentieth century, which actually began in 1914, came to an abrupt end in the years 1989-91, with the ending of the Cold War, the coming down of the Berlin Wall, and the breakup and dismemberment of the Eastern European satellite empire of the Soviet Union, which was followed by the decomposition of the Soviet Union itself into what looks like our contemporary equivalent of entropic disarray. To my knowledge, this historic, virtually millennial advent did not, or has not yet, brought forth any formidable utopian imaginations. One such effort in that direction which attracted a certain amount of attention at the beginning of the decade, Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History and the Last Man*, confidently asserted that the planet was being integrated so rapidly that Western values and institutions, such as democracy, the rule of law, capitalism, and freedom of expression would imminently be universally accepted and that history would have then come to an end. *Utopia advenit*. Sometime around 1992 it began to be noticed that these circumstances did not exactly match the conditions that were prevailing in Yugoslavia, Africa, or the former Soviet Union. *Sic transit gloria Utopiae*.

Where else do we nowadays find utopian claims and envisagements? Well, there are always the fundamentalists of technology to turn to. There

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is someone like Alvin Toffler, with his *Third Wave*, the society of the future, in which we will inhabit "electronic cottages," and work at home on our computers, literalizing the "Literary Machine" that was the nightmare of madness or despair for Gissing's poor writer of a century ago. There are also our current academic Morlocks with their flimflams of hypertext which will magically turn illiterates into Tolstoys, and with their virtual universities that will eventually contain virtual students. This faithful technological flock affirm that utopia is beckoning to us from the electronic world out there in cyberspace. As for the rest, utopias these days, like good men all the time, are hard to find.

But dystopias are not. As for our professorial technophiles, one might recommend to them some post-modern cyberpunk science fiction, such as William Gibson and Bruce Sterling's *The Difference Engine*. Set in England in 1855, this anti-novel presages the past by projecting it as an already computerized universe in which Babbage's calculating machine has been perfected, and in which a fictional character such as Sybil from Disraeli sleeps with the likes of Edwin Chadwick and Charles Kingsley, among others. Progress and evolution have naturally been supplanted by discontinuity, contingency, and catastrophe, and the Victorian past is portended as the loony bin that the future present is fondly commemorated as being. Or there is Margaret Atwood's popular *The Handmaid's Tale*, a feminist dystopia in which women are deprived of their literacy, their voices, their entire access to the privileged domain of written culture. Indeed, as far as I am able to tell, most current representations of the future seem to be tending toward dystopia. One of the more frequent among recent iterations is to be found in those novels and films that imagine the world after either a nuclear war or some equivalently annoying ecological catastrophe has occurred. Such opera as *Blade Runner*, in either version, or *Mad Max* or Paul Auster's *In the Country of Last Things* are convenient illustrations to hand. This last example begins with the following characteristically ambiguous sentence: "These are the last things, she wrote." And it goes on to memorialize a post-disaster world that is familiarly Hobbesian, that features zero degree of human possibility. Everyone is consumed by the wish to die: there are suicide sects and euthanasia clinics that are hard to get into because their waiting lists are so long; there are assassination clubs, and those who unfortunately remain alive have become homeless—the new universal condition. Life has become both post-human and posthumous; memories have gone the way of expectations, including memories of the future; the best work to be had is that of a Garbage Broker, and each individual survivor has learned to speak a private language. Human life, as we know it, has become, we are supposed to imagine, literally unbearable.

As for those academics and journalists who are currently writing books and articles about the "global situation" (nothing on a smaller scale appears

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

to do any longer), there tends to be a general, if good-humored, millennial despair about such work that amounts to a resigned dystopian shrug of the shoulders. We, all of us, are at the same time undergoing both globalization and fragmentation; the present is disintegrating into a future that will be simultaneously tribalized and totalitarian. The comfortable, even cozy, stable bipolar world of the Cold War has been replaced by a chaos of localistic identities and loyalties and uncountable, disorderly civil wars. The universal totalitarianoid advance of the global market moves pseudopod by pseudopod along with retribalized particularisms that are tantamount to general fragmentation. Culture and anarchy have miraculously become virtually the same thing. Transnational corporations rule the roost, and while IBM, McDonalds, and MTV provide the global substance or Jell-o that suffuses our present totalistic culture, there persists within its spacious interstices the spiced-up anarchy of warring fundamentalisms, localisms, sects, schisms, conventicles, and smaller intra-tribal platoons and squads. From this point of view, the Cold War, with its reassuring coherence, seems like Happy Valley.

What appears for the moment to have been eclipsed is the power to imagine, if not the will to contemplate, any possible Utopian future. There is at present no theory of the future that allows for such an imagination, unless one trusts that the market and its accompanying theoretical and conceptual apparatuses constitute either Utopia or a movement toward it. One of the questions that crops up at such a conjuncture is whether we are better off without Utopian devisings to weigh against the sustained anxieties that the contingent possibility of human, social disaster always entails. My own guess or intuition in this matter is that the loss of Utopian imaginative and theoretical capabilities, like the loss of religious belief that preceded them and was in fact both their precursor and precondition, has or will bring in its train incalculable and almost certainly saddening consequences. In any event it is, at the close of this century, a bereavement that previous centuries of our culture did not incur—and one final consideration that remains outstanding is whether the loss is a permanency, or whether, like the Queen in *Through the Looking Glass*, we will be able to recover, if not to recuperate, our memories of the things that happened the week after next. If not, then it is possible that all we will come to is simple history—and somebody else's history at that—not the most comforting of consolations at the end of this terrible century.

Igor Webb: Thank you, Professor Marcus. Perhaps we should begin with questions or comments from the panel before we go on to the floor. Is there anything that anyone would like to add or ask?

Denis Donoghue: I am very interested in many things both Karen and Steven said. I was touched and moved by Steven's use of word "bereavement."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The sentiment clearly implies continuity between past and present. But it seems to me that there is a slight discrepancy in one respect between what Steven and Karen were saying about post-modernism. The most famous description of it—Lyotard's in *La condition post-moderne*—is that post-modernism means incredulity towards all meta-narratives. If that's true, it implies that there is no sense of bereavement, indeed that one of the ways of dealing with the present situation is to denounce the redemptive fallacy. Leo Bersani's book, *The Culture of Redemption,* makes a sustained assault on the first generation of the major modernists, culminating in an attack on Joyce's *Ulysses.* Eliot and Yeats are consistently attacked because they looked for a narrative redemption of time. If I understand the post-modern motif, the corresponding urge would be to forget about the redemption of time, and regard all such attempts as narratively jejeune. The promiscuousness of post-modernism would regard everything as equally interesting.

Karen Wilkin: I was struck by your linking of culture and anarchy, which unfortunately corresponds far more to my understanding of post-modernist views in the visual arts. I entirely agree with Denis's analysis. The great difference between post-modernist visual artists and the classical generation of modernists, who are now held in much disrepute, is that modernism was not a refutation of the past but rather deeply involved with bereavement in the sense you have posited. It was disenchantment with the debased version of traditional art, not rejection of traditional art per se, that fueled what turned out to be very radical and often inadvertent inventions by the first modernist generation of painters and sculptors. Greenberg has in fact defined modernist painting as a holding action for quality, if one is allowed to use that word in public.

Steven Marcus: Both of these contradictory notions or gestures coexist. Their coexistence is something we have yet to make adequate sense of. The post-modern dancing in the graveyard, which is the repudiation of bereavement, seems to me to have little beyond bereavement in its background. The dancing in the graveyard can best be understood as a response to and away from the previous bereavement, just as the rejection of meta-narrative is a response to the sense of loss that preceded it and was its precondition. I do not believe that these responses obliterate or, as it were, constitute a Hegelian *Aufhebung* of the past, but are rather simple reversals of it in a number of senses. I do not see transcendence and a new formation but a reversal of the previous formation, which is why I think it's still appropriate to speak of loss and bereavement. I do not think that post-modernism stands in relation to modernism as modernism stood in relation to its past, which was not merely a standing of continuity but a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

continuity which *also* transcended that past while bringing new forms to life and carrying older shapes, genres, and themes forward as transformations and radical reconfigurations.

Denis Donoghue: Steven, wouldn't you nevertheless still say that if it is bereavement it is either unacknowledged or repudiated bereavement? That seems to me a sentiment that is immensely significant and perhaps difficult to deal with.

Steven Marcus: Yes, you are right. I myself in reading certain post-modern texts have found what I take to be unacknowledged bereavement in their interstices. That is to say between hops from one gravesite to another I have detected moments in which there is a space that can only be filled with the sense of loss, a mournful absence that has been repressed. I don't think that the sense of loss is or has been worked through.

Gunther Stent: In the circles in which I move, there actually is a very active utopian movement, partly evoked by President Bush's declaration that the closing decade of the twentieth century is the decade of the brain. I am referring to the novel discipline of neurophilosophy and its utopian solution of the ancient mind-body problem. Neurophilosophers contend that now, at last, with the tremendous advances that have been made in the understanding of the brain, it will pretty soon be possible to reduce or explain all mental processes in terms of neurophysiology. Though this contention is widely accepted, no neurophilosopher or anyone else, as far as I know, actually troubled to work out the details of this utopian human condition. What would a society be like in which neurophysical reduction of the mind has been achieved? How would people act if they believed that love, moral responsibility, faith, or esthetic pleasure are nothing but the ebb and flow of potassium and sodium in identified cerebral networks? I am waiting for a latter-day neurophilosophical Bellamy to write a credible *Looking Backward from the Year 2100.*

Dmitri Urnov: My question to Dr. Donoghue and Dr. Marcus concerns the point they both touched upon but didn't elaborate and that is the end of the century as the end of the world. They talked about *fin du monde* in the 1890s, and it came true in 1914. It would be naive and simply stupid to ask for possible scenarios. But what tendencies do you believe would be dominant in ending our world?

Denis Donoghue: I don't see or feel around me anything corresponding to the sense of an ending which one certainly feels through the literature of the 1890s. Most people nowadays, for example, are not terrified by

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

nuclear catastrophe or nuclear war. Fifteen or twenty years ago, that fear was much more widely felt. The current mood is one of indifference or complacency. I am dismayed by the frequency, the ease, the glibness with which President Clinton avails himself of the casual metaphor of the bridge into the twenty-first century.

Steven Marcus: I agree for the most part, and would like to make some parallel points. If you think of H.G. Wells's *Time Machine*, at the end of the ninteenth century there were several imaginings of the end of the world. One was Darwinian, that is to say evolution would not end with the human race, but the race itself would go through the processes of devolution and finally extinction, and the second law of thermodynamics would ultimately bring about the end of the world. The end of the world, of course, was subsequently dramatized with terrible force by World War I. The twentieth century in turn ended at about 1989, so we have been living for some time in the twenty-first century. But as I have already said, the twentieth century ended with the resolution of the Cold War and all that such an astonishing conclusion entails. The fear of nuclear catastrophe, which might bring about the effective end of the world, has in fact receded. It is at the moment no longer part of the popular imagination. What has taken its place, but with nothing like the same staying force, is the fear of ecological disaster. That is to say we will destroy the planetary environment, and will reduce the physical terrestrial world to some sort of wasteland. In short, it will render the earth uninhabitable. I think Denis was partly right about President Clinton, but this was no surprise. However, one thing has changed between the end of the last century and this one, if not among people like President Clinton then certainly among historians. What has passed is a belief that was held by people of great intellectual stature until the end of the nineteenth century and beyond, and no longer is: the belief in progress. You can't pick up a book by a respectable contemporary historian and find anything like the belief in progress that existed until about forty years ago.

Igor Webb: We all assume, as has never been assumed before, that technological advances will continue and will produce better things, that we have limitless, unforseen possibilites. But we no longer believe that that necessarily implies anything for social relations, whereas it used to be assumed that there was an intimate relationship between rationality, science, and social order.

Robert Wistrich: Professor Donoghue, do you think that our picture of the last fin de siècle, particularly the portrait you drew of a tragic generation, may not be all that representative of what a large number of people who were living

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

at that time actually felt? Could it not in some sense reflect a particular segment, admittedly a very articulate, creative segment, of the intelligentsia, who felt trapped by a feeling of morbidity, unresolved personal conflicts, inability to find their place in the society? Perhaps it also reflected their material conditions which were detached from the normal life experience of most people. Isn't it possible that around 1900 even people who were far worse off had the greatest sense of possibilities of improvement? I am not thinking only of movements such as socialism. Even from a historian's point of view it is interesting that we have two apparently contradictory images of the 1890s. One is the concept of decadence, but there is the equally familiar idea of what the French called *la belle époque*. In central Europe there has been a lot of nostalgia for that period as a sort of golden age, not only culturally but in terms of personal security, stability, etc., that was destroyed after the first world war. After all, at the end of the century, there had been a tremendous improvement in material, scientific, and technological terms. Everything seemed possible then. New inventions had transformed life, so while some were pessimistic about where it would lead, most people could see the benefits. But they had not gone through the disastrous experiences we have in the twentieth century—two world wars, horrible massacres, the Holocaust, the possibility of thermonuclear war. That must play itself out in a different sense of what this fin de siècle means, but I am not quite sure in what way. From our point of view, the people you were describing could almost have been posturing, in terms of the tragic nature of what they saw around them. I am not saying they were insincere, but their experiences almost seem trivial in the light of what we have experienced in the twentieth century.

Denis Donoghue: I would agree with most of what you said except with the word "posturing." I do think that many of the most alert and sensitive people at the end of the nineteenth century felt deep misgivings about many of the political, social, and cultural assumptions with which they had grown up, and about the notion of empire. Mostly, they did not feel the glory of bringing civilization to the natives but rather the appalling cruelties and vanities displayed by western nations in the process of doing so, including Britain, France, Germany, and Belgium. Not only in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, but also in his own experience of investigating what had been going on in the Belgian Congo. I don't think that that is "posturing."

Insofar as we can make any kind of useful comparison between our own fin de siècle and the 1890s, there is one source of barely suppressed dismay, which is our realization that our achievements have not brought about the slightest improvement in sensitivity, in the moral imagination. The moral sense remains profoundly untouched. We can register all the abominable things that have happened and been done, culminating indeed in the Holocaust—but not ending in that.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Jane Collear: I was a bit surprised that you failed to deal with the many artists around the turn of the century who dealt directly with some of the issues of change, utopia and dystopia that were also prevalent in the literature of that time. I'm thinking specifically of the symbolists around the end of the nineteenth century and the expressionists at the beginning of the twentieth century. One of the reasons that a formalist, Greenbergian view of modernism has fallen into disrepute today is that it does not work terribly well. Vast stretches of modernism such as symbolism and expressionism are not properly accounted for in that view and even aspects of modern art, principally French and then later American, that fit into a formalist view are not fully explicated by a formalist approach. To me, one of the things that the fin de siècle is about is messiness. The certainties that were posited earlier in this century just may not work terribly well in dealing with the situation that we are in today or were in the past.

Karen Wilkin: You are absolutely right. I did not discuss the symbolists in any detail, and I certainly did not discuss the expressionists for the specific reason that I was trying to stick very closely to the year 1896, which is not a great year to talk about symbolism or the German expressionists. The notion that there is a great deal that is not dealt with and is not addressed by formal criticism is obvious. It does not matter whether you are speaking of Roger Fry or Clement Greenberg or any of the younger formalists who have come out of this tradition. I was attempting to stress an attitude towards the past which has changed, whether because of a disbelief in the validity of the past or a sense of discontinuity caused by entirely new situations. These questions remain to be answered. Messiness, absolutely! That messiness was taking the form of inclusiveness, of denying the exclusive and very clear-cut rules and tastes of academic art—where the only acceptable model was the Greek canon with certain selected old masters allowed as models, not even the entire range of the old masters. If you read Sir Joshua Reynolds's *Discourses*, his addresses to the graduating class of the Royal Academy, you will discover that there is not only a hierarchy of subject matter, but that he is very specific as to which artists he recommends younger artists look at. The inclusiveness that allows the young Picasso to be profoundly affected by African art or Matisse and Derain and Vlaminck to become equally excited about Oceanic art and Islamic art, and Van Gogh and Gauguin wildly enthusiastic about not only Japanese prints, but about the most ordinary popular art of the day, the mass-produced religious prints, can be called messiness, too. It can be very enriching and it has certainly been part of our post-modernism as well.

Tibor Machan: It seems to me that the relationship between progress and moral sensibilities is not as dismal as some of you make it sound, because

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

every new generation has a chance of refashioning the moral atmosphere. It is not a condition that is inherited, that is contagious. My children will have a chance to be good people or bad people. I see an openness toward the future, rather than despondency about how it's not as cheerful or as hopeful as it used to be. I was born in Budapest on the eve of World War II. My childhood was surrounded by bombs and mines blowing up around me. I don't see things now as all that bad, generally speaking, although in some spheres there are serious things to fuss about. On the whole, there is an atmosphere of despondency here. I find that to be disturbing and I just want to remind us that what will happen in the future to some extent is up to us.

Igor Webb: I'm sorry we have to close this discussion, but we might get back to all this later on, especially to the relationship between technology and morality.

Session V: Philosophy: From Metaphysics to Language Philosophy

Richard Garner: This semester I have been teaching a senior seminar on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, a work set very self-consciously at the turn of a century. My students have happily found that philosophy and metaphysics in this work are not as divorced from our world as they had supposed they might be. Instead these disciplines in Dante's hands are urgently engaged and entangled with life on earth and current events. As I see what Professors Haack, Machan, and Stent have planned for their talks today about philosophy, I realize that their talks are in fact, in that wonderful Dantesque way, very much engaged with this world around us as we move towards the new century.

Now, I would like to introduce to you Susan Haack, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Miami. She is the author of *Philosophy of Logics*, *Evidence and Inquiry: Towards Reconstruction in Epistemology*, and *Deviant Logic, Fuzzy Logic: Beyond the Formalism*. The title of her presentation is "The Ethos of Inquiry and the Ethics of Intellect."

Susan Haack: I take my theme from Ralph Waldo Emerson, who urged his contemporaries, "let us affront and reprimand the smooth mediocrity and squalid contentment of the times."

I am going to talk about what real inquiry is, how it can come to be corrupted, and what consequences are to be expected when that happens—and what this tells us about the "research ethic" and the ethics of research, in philosophy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

As you are probably already beginning to suspect, I don't think philosophy is at present in a particularly desirable condition. I am especially troubled by an increasingly articulate irrationalism, a despair of the very possibility of honest inquiry. And I hope to show how the environment in which philosophical work is presently conducted—the ethos of inquiry, in the words of my title—has contributed to this despair.

Genuine inquiry aims at the truth. This is a tautology (*Webster's*: "inquiry: search for truth, information or knowledge . . ."). There is, however, a lot of pseudo-inquiry about; that is why, when the government institutes an Official Inquiry into this or that, some of us reach for our scare quotes. The difference between pseudo-inquiry and the real thing is in the motive: while a genuine inquirer seeks the truth of some question, whatever the color of that truth, a pseudo-inquirer seeks to make a case for the truth of some proposition(s) determined in advance.

Pseudo-inquiry comes in two main kinds. A sham reasoner is concerned not to find out how things really are, but to make a case for some proposition to which he is already unbudgeably committed. A fake reasoner is concerned not to find out how things really are, but to advance himself by making a case for some proposition to the truth-value of which he is indifferent.

Genuine truth-seeking tends to advance inquiry, while sham and fake reasoning tend to impede it. Both fake and, especially, sham reasoners are motivated to avoid examining any apparently contrary evidence or argument too closely, to play down its importance or impugn its relevance, to contort themselves explaining it away. Both sham and, especially, fake reasoners are motivated to indulge in that "affected obscurity" which Locke recognized as a chief occupational hazard of philosophy.

The genuine inquirer, by contrast, wants to get to the truth of the matter that concerns him, whether or not that truth comports with what he believed at the outset, and whether or not his acknowledgment of that truth is likely to get him tenure, or to make him rich, famous, or popular. So he is motivated to seek out and assess the worth of evidence and arguments thoroughly and impartially. He will be ready to acknowledge, to himself as well as others, where his evidence and arguments seem shakiest and his articulation of problem or solution vaguest. He will be willing to go with the evidence even to unpopular conclusions, and to acknowledge someone else's having found the truth he was seeking. And, far from having a motive to obfuscate, he will try to see, and explain, things as clearly as he can.

Sham or fake reasoners may hit upon the truth, and, when they do, may come up with good evidence and arguments. Commitment to a cause, desire for reputation, are powerful motivating forces which can prompt energetic intellectual effort. But the intelligence and ingenuity that help a

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

genuine inquirer to figure things out, help sham and fake inquirers to suppress unfavorable evidence or awkward arguments more effectively, or to devise more impressively obscure formulations.

Genuine inquirers may come to false conclusions or be led astray by misleading evidence or arguments. But an honest inquirer will not suppress unfavorable evidence or awkward arguments, nor disguise his failure with affected obscurity; so, even when he fails, he will not impede others' efforts.

Of course, real human beings do not conform neatly to the three types I have distinguished; their motives are mixed, and they are capable of many degrees and kinds of self-deception. That is why it matters whether the environment in which it is conducted is hospitable to good, honest intellectual work.

The environment will be hospitable to genuine inquiry insofar as incentives and rewards favor those whose work is creative, careful, honest and thorough; insofar as journals, conferences, etc., make important work readily available to others in the area; insofar as channels of mutual scrutiny are open, and successful building on others' work is encouraged. The environment will encourage sham and fake reasoning insofar as incentives and rewards encourage people to disguise rather than tackle problems with their approach; to go for the flashy, the fashionable, and the impressively obscure over the deep, the difficult, and the painfully clear; insofar as the availability of the best and most significant work is hindered rather than enabled by journals and conferences bloated with the trivial, the faddish, and the carelessly or deliberately unclear; insofar as mutual scrutiny is impeded by fad, fashion, obfuscation, and fear of offending the influential.

Looking at this list, I don't see how the conclusion can be avoided that the environment in which academic work is presently conducted is an inhospitable one. It is a preposterous environment, in the special sense Jacques Barzun gives that word: valuing knowledge, putting the last first and the first last, we "*preposterize* the idea and say . . . everyone shall produce written research in order to live, and it shall be decreed a knowledge explosion."

Barzun exaggerates, but not much. Everybody aspiring to the tenure-track, to promotion, a raise, a better job, or, of course, academic stardom, *had* better produce written, published research. And it *is* pretty much taken for granted that this explosion of publications is a good thing, that it represents a significant contribution to knowledge.

Yet much of what is published is, at best, trivial stuff, putting one in mind of that observation: "Rubbish is rubbish, but the history of rubbish is scholarship." Seriously, though: few if any of us will have a truly original idea every few years, let alone every few months; genuinely important philosophical work usually takes years of frustration and failure, and a great philosopher may not produce his best work until middle-age or later. So

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

how did we find ourselves in an atmosphere of preposterous announcements in paper after paper, book after book, that all previous work in the area is hopelessly misconceived, and here is a radically new approach which will revolutionize the whole field?

As ever more complex and sophisticated equipment is needed to contrive ever more *recherché* observations, research in the sciences has become ever more expensive; a culture of grants-and-research-projects has grown up and science has become, *inter alia*, big business. The consequences for science itself are not altogether healthy; but when disciplines like philosophy, where serious work requires, not fancy equipment, but only (only!) time and peace of mind, mimic the organization of the sciences, when the whole apparatus of grants-and-research-projects becomes so ordinary that we scarcely notice how extraordinary it is, when we adapt to a business ethos, the consequences are still worse.

In part because it is so intellectually impressive, in part because it is so useful, and in part, no doubt, because it is so expensive, science enjoys enormous prestige, in which the rest of us would dearly like to share. And, inevitably perhaps, as a consequence of universities' having become such big businesses, many university administrators have become enamored of a business management ethos which values "entrepreneurial skills," i.e., the ability to obtain large sums of money to undertake large research projects, above originality or depth, and which encourages conceptions of "efficiency" and "productivity" more appropriate to a manufacturing plant than to the pursuit of truth.

In disciplines like philosophy, feeling ourselves the poor relations in such a culture, we have adapted with a kind of entrepreneurship which diverts us from real work, and is sometimes, to speak plainly, nothing more than hucksterism: centers for this and that, new journals for the legitimization and promotion of the latest fad, projects requiring secretaries, research assistants, or, better yet, more expensive and powerful computers or, best of all, a laboratory. Our adaptation has lowered the motive with which philosophical work is done, fostering sham and fake inquiry and eroding intellectual integrity.

It has significantly affected what kinds of work get done, channeling effort into areas judged likely to attract funding—e.g., interdisciplinary work which allies philosophy with more prestigious disciplines such as cognitive psychology or artificial intelligence or medicine, etc. It has also significantly affected what kinds of conclusions are reached. Where effort is directed by the hope of large grants into, say, the border territory of epistemology with cognitive science, the probability rises that the conclusion that will be reached is that long-standing epistemological questions can be quickly resolved or as quickly dissolved by appeal to this or that work in cognitive science. Where effort is directed by the hope of large grants into,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

say, the relevance of feminism to philosophy of science, the probability rises that the conclusion that will be reached is that feminism requires us, as Sandra Harding preposterously puts it, to "reinvent science and theorizing." (Challenged, nearly a decade later, by skeptics wanting to know what breakthroughs feminist science had achieved, Harding told us that, thanks to feminist scientists, we now know that menstruation, pregnancy and menopause aren't diseases. Gosh.) No one is so naive as to imagine that large grants might be forthcoming to show that cognitive science *has no* bearing on those long-standing epistemological questions, or even that its bearing is (as I believe) though real enough, oblique and undramatic; or to show that (as I believe) feminism *has no* relevance to the theory of scientific knowledge.

The psychological mechanisms involved are quite subtle. Simple, downright dishonesty is the exception; some degree of *self*-deception is the rule. And this is likely, naturally, to leave a residue of ambivalence, such as one can hear in this plea for the psychologization of epistemology: a return to a psychologistic conception of epistemology "is especially timely now, when cognitive psychology has renewed prestige. . . ."

Still, all this academic boosterism might be *only* a waste of time if, eventually, it came out in the wash of mutual scrutiny and criticism. But instead of efficient mechanisms of communication and mutual scrutiny, what we have is a mind-numbing clamor of publications, conferences, meetings, which makes it close to impossible to hear what is worthwhile.

The director of Rutgers University Press writes that "[w]e are . . . part of the university personnel system and . . . often publish books whose primary reason for existence is the author's academic advancement, not the advancement of knowledge." The new editor of the *American Philosophical Quarterly* cheerfully acknowledges that publishing in the journals has become less a way to communicate significant ideas than a form of professional certification, and that being adequately informed in one's field of course no longer requires that one actually *read* all that stuff. He seems blandly unaware how publication-as-professional-certification gets in the way of the mutual scrutiny that might mitigate some of the worst damage of sham and fake reasoning and separate the worthwhile from the dross.

As more and more is published in the journals, it has become impossible, except by sheer luck, to find the good stuff. For the more ambitious, championship of a simple, startling idea—even, or perhaps especially, an egregiously false or impressively obscure idea—has become a good route to reputation. For the more modestly mediocre, the self-serving variation on a fashionable party line has become a good route to security.

And inevitably, as it becomes harder to make oneself heard in the journals, one has to publish a book; and as that book-published-by-a-reputable-academic-press becomes a requisite for tenure, we see ever

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

more bloated publishers' catalogues filled with ever more exaggerated descriptions and endorsements. Inevitably, again, it becomes impossible, except by sheer luck, to find the good stuff, and. . . . But I won't bore you by writing the previous paragraph all over again!

And, as more and more books are published, the audience reached by each book has dwindled. Better, from the point of view of sheer self-preservation, let alone of impressing deans, etc., with one's "scholarly productivity," not to spend too long writing a book. And better, too, from the point of view of making oneself heard, to write the kind of book that might interest a trade publisher, or at least will get reviewed in the non-academic press. And this too favors the simple, startling idea; even, or perhaps especially, the startlingly false or impressively obscure idea. . . . But I promised not to bore you by writing that paragraph all over again!

Like books and journals, conferences might be, and occasionally are, important channels of communication. But we are all familiar with the reality that your home institution will pay your expenses *if* you give a paper; with the conference announcements which discreetly let it be known that, so long as you pay the large registration fee, your paper will be accepted; with the stupefying programs day after day of umpteen parallel sessions; with the twenty-minute, the twelve-minute, even, of late, the ten-minute presentation; with the extent to which conferences have become less a matter of communication than of "contacts," of "exposure," and, of course, of expenses-paid trips to agreeable places.

Under pressure of preposterism, we grossly over-rate the usefulness of what we like to call "stimulation," and grossly under-rate the need for time, peace of mind, mature reflection. I think of Santayana's character sketch of Royce: an "overworked, standardised, academic engine, creaking and thumping on at the call of duty or of habit, with no thought of sparing itself or anyone else." Preposterism can only too easily turn the best of us into just such overworked, standardized, academic engines—and turn the worst of us into purveyors of philosophical snake-oil.

Two tendencies in recent philosophy, on the face of it radically opposed to each other, both result in part from our adaptation to a "research ethic" more appropriate to the sciences: scientism, i.e., linking philosophy too closely, or inappropriately, to science; and radical critique of the sciences as no more than ideology masked by rhetorical bullying in the form of appeals to "rationality," "objectivity," and so forth. The former is the effect of envy, the latter of resentment, of the success of the sciences.

Scientism comes in three main varieties: mathematical or logical pseudo-rigor, which is a kind of affected obscurity; the hope of turning philosophical problems over to the natural sciences to resolve, which covertly changes the questions in hopes of quick solutions; and overt repudiation of philosophical

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

questions in favor of natural-scientific ones—which leads in short order to irrationalism.

After all, natural-scientific investigation cannot reasonably be expected to answer such characteristically philosophical questions as: are the natural sciences epistemologically special, and if so, why? is its yielding true predictions an indication of the truth of a theory, and if so, why?, etc.; and it is incomprehensible why, unless these were legitimate questions with less-than-skeptical answers, one could be justified, as the most ambitious style of scientism proposes, in doing science instead of philosophy.

Hence the peculiar affinity of revolutionary scientism with the anti-scientific attitudes which, as I conjecture, are prompted by resentment, as scientism is prompted by envy, of the sciences. One hears from Paul Churchland, on the scientistic side, that, since truth is not the primary aim of the ceaseless cognitive activity of the ganglia of the sea-slug, it should maybe cease to be a primary aim of science, and even that talk of truth may make no sense; from Richard Rorty, on the anti-science side, that truth is just what can survive all conversational objections, and that the only sense in which science is exemplary is as a model of human solidarity. One hears from Patricia Churchland, on the scientistic side, that "truth, whatever that is, definitely takes the hindmost"; from Sandra Harding, on the anti-science side, that "the truth—whatever that is!—will not set you free." One hears from Steven Stich, on the scientistic side, that truth is neither intrinsically nor instrumentally valuable, and that a justified belief is one which conduces to whatever the believer values; from Steve Fuller, on the anti-science side, that the worth of scholarship all depends on "who[m] you are trying to court in your work."

And now one begins to see why preposterism poses a particular peril for philosophy, the discipline to which it falls to inquire into inquiry itself, its proper conduct and conditions.

Here is C.S. Peirce, a century or so ago, describing what happens when pseudo-inquiry is commonplace: "men come to look upon reasoning as mainly decorative. . . . The result of this state of things is, of course, a rapid deterioration of intellectual vigor. . . . [M]an loses his conceptions of truth and of reason." This is just what is taking place before our eyes. The ubiquity of sham and fake reasoning has induced a factitious despair of the possibility of attaining truth by investigation—the despair revealed in the astonishing outbreak of sneer quotes with which so much recent philosophical writing expresses its distrust of "truth," "reality," "facts," "reason," "objectivity," etc.

When sham and fake reasoning are ubiquitous, people become uncomfortably aware, or half-aware, that reputations are made as often by clever championship of the indefensible or the incomprehensible as by serious intellectual work, as often by mutual promotion as by merit.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Knowing, or half-knowing, this, they become increasingly skeptical of what they hear and read. Their confidence in what passes for true declines, and with it their willingness to use the words "truth," "rationality," etc., without the precaution of scare quotes. And as those scare quotes become ubiquitous, people's confidence in the concepts of truth and reason falters, and one begins to hear (from Richard Rorty): "I do not have much use for notions like . . . 'objective truth'," "'true' [is] a word which applies to those beliefs upon which we are able to agree," or (from Bruno Latour and Steve Woolgar): "a fact is nothing but a statement with no modality . . . and no trace of authorship," or (from Steve Fuller): "I don't see any clear distinction between 'good scholarship' and 'political relevance.'"

The inference from the true premise that what passes for truth, objective fact, rational argument, etc., is often no such thing, to the false conclusion that the notions of truth, objective fact, rationality, etc., are humbug, is manifestly invalid; I call it "the 'passes for' fallacy." Of course, it is not only fallacious, but also self-defeating; for if the conclusion were true, one could never have grounds for accepting the premise from which it is supposedly derived. This argument is, nevertheless, ubiquitous, as ubiquitous as the irrationalism it promotes.

Another paper might try comprehensively to classify the various styles of irrationalism now in fashion, and to identify where each goes wrong—except, of course, that to do that would require, not a slim paper, but a fat book. Probably one could discern, in the wild kaleidoscope of contemporary irrationalisms—relativist, tribalist, irrealist, literary-theoretical, political, post-modernist, multiculturalist, feminist, ethno-methodological, social-constructivist, etc.—a recurring pattern of over-reaction to the simplifications of Logical Positivism and its too-deferential attitude to the sciences. And doubtless one would find oneself obliged to repeat to the point of tedium that one cannot discover by genuine inquiry that there is no such thing as genuine inquiry, that one cannot have objective evidence that there is no such thing as objective evidence, and so on.

But my goal has been, instead, to understand how difficult and how demanding well-conducted inquiry is apt to be—difficult in requiring hard work of the intellect, demanding in requiring its operation to be unhampered by one's wishes, fears, or hopes—and how this tempts us to irrationalism. We humans are fallible creatures, our senses and cognitive capacities limited and our intellectual integrity fragile; haste, sloppiness, busy-work, wishful thinking, come more easily to us than the difficult and demanding business of thorough, honest, creative inquiry. Pseudo-inquiry is always easier, always a temptation—and always encourages that despair of the possibility of the real thing which is a recurrent theme in philosophy today.

But this is a factitious despair, which is bound, as Francis Bacon eloquently put it long ago, to "cut the sinews and spurs of industry"; and, as

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

he continued, "all for the miserable vainglory of having it believed that whatever has not yet been discovered and comprehended can never be discovered and comprehended hereafter."

And yet—here, finally, is the ethical thesis my title promised—it seems to me downright indecent to make one's living as an academic if one does not, as those who despair of the possibility of honest inquiry *can* not, acknowledge what C.I. Lewis once described as our "tacit professional oath never to subordinate the motive of objective truth-seeking to any subjective preference or inclination or any expediency or opportunistic consideration." And now, I hope, you see the pertinence of those words of Emerson's with which I began.

Richard Garner: Thank you. Now, we will hear from Tibor Machan, Professor of Philosophy at Auburn University. His most recent book is *Private Rights and Public Illusions*. His talk is titled "The Two Ways of Liberalism."

Tibor Machan: For those in the West, especially the U.S., the various understandings of the term "liberalism" can be rather frustrating, even annoying, since the word "liberty" has had not just analytic but a good deal of normative, even emotive significance. So how one uses it is going to matter to many people and will call forth considerable rebuke from those who offer a different rendition. Although it is utopian to believe that we will arrive at the perfect identity of meaning of any term, especially one with normative implications—since each of us has a stake in getting our idiosyncratic ways recorded just so—it borders on corruption to try to win one's ethical or political disputes by perpetrating blatant conceptual revisions.

"Liberalism" in popular U.S. political parlance has come to mean in the USA the championing of a strong welfare state. Why call this "liberalism"? Is this some kind of sleight of hand? (The same could be suspected of the current use of the kin concept "rights," when some claim we have a basic "right" to welfare, health care, etc.) Political mileage can be gained from persuading a good many folks, ones who do not practice independent thinking on such matters, to pick up on the implications of such revisionist linguistics. Thus, "freedom" or "liberty" seems, at times, to be used to mean just the opposite, namely, involuntary servitude; and "rights," too, has come to mean legally enforceable obligations, not liberty, freedom from other people's intrusive conduct upon oneself, as it once did.

Still, one can also find a respectable enough tradition in Western political thought that supports the current use of "liberal" in American politics—although less so of "rights." I have in mind what has come to be called the idea of positive freedom—which is used to mean the condition of being enabled to reach a desired or desirable goal, as in "the truth shall set you free."

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

When one is free of disease, free of ignorance, free of poverty, one is free in this meaningful sense. Furthermore, once the idea of self-causation, self-determination, origination or personal initiative is left philosophically unsupported—and, especially, scientifically hopeless—the sense of being free when no one intrudes upon one, or when no other person aggresses upon someone, carries little significance. Aggression from others under such conditions is but a natural impediment, no different from the "aggression" that a tornado or virus will manifest. The only true freedom is what Marx advanced, following Hegel: freedom from natural necessity.

Actually Hobbes also held the view that what human beings are most in need of is this kind of "freedom of impediments," a notion embraced by some neo-classical economists, such as the late George Stigler. According to them, freedom is really nothing more than diminished cost, the reduction of obstacles one must overcome in one's life. Furthermore, since no one is more deserving of success than another, since everything just happens, nothing is ultimately up to any of us. In a just society everyone ought to have as much of everything good as possible to arrange via effective collective, state action. That, too, leads to a polity in which basic positive freedom is prized above everything else.

Actually, classical liberalism, which has had certain affinities to modern scientism, has contributed in some measure to an understanding of human nature as passive, inert, incapable of self-determination, something that has spawned support for the welfare state. In other words, one of the paths to classical liberalism can lead, as well, to contemporary welfare statism. In that outlook, it is central that people are taken to be victims—or, rather, casualties—of their circumstances deserving neither credit nor blame for their lot in life.

But it is contemporary welfare-state liberalism that is most clearly loyal to that version of freedom which arises from the understanding of human nature as basically inert, as all matter is in the framework of the ontology of classical mechanics. So what people need is not to be left free by their fellows but to be made free by removing natural impediments to their motion and development. (That this poses a paradox—since how can anyone then initiate the action to make others free becomes very problematic—is not often noticed.)

Actually, neither classical nor modern liberalism is spared scorn from some of our major political philosophers. MacIntyre, for example, states:

> [T]he Marxist understanding of liberalism as ideological, as a deceiving and self-deceiving mask for certain social interests, remains compelling. . . . Liberalism in the name of freedom imposes a certain kind of unacknowledged domination, and one which in the long run

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> tends to dissolve traditional human ties and to impoverish social and cultural relationships. Liberalism, while imposing through state power regimes that declare everyone free to pursue whatever they take to be their own good, deprives most people of the possibility of understanding their lives as a quest for the discovery and achievement of the good, especially by the way in which it attempts to discredit those traditional forms of human community within which this project has to be embodied.

The usual tirades against at least classical liberalism—that it fosters atomism, subjective autonomy and, thus, ethical relativism, decadence and social life that rests on power rather than justice—voiced by conservatives as well as radicals, may all be added to this lament of MacIntyre.

Is there anything to these vehement sentiments?

The honest answer is that, if only inadvertently, MacIntyre's hostility has something, albeit minimal, going for it. The lamentable features of liberalism have to do with failing to distinguish two considerably different ways in which the system can be defended and insisting on advancing one as superior to the other, whereas probably just the opposite is true.

The case for a free society, as understood within the earlier classical liberal traditions, has been advanced on several bases, including skepticism, mysticism, positivism, natural law and natural rights, utilitarianism and pragmatism. Yet, liberalism was primarily defended as a modern approach to politics, one that has gained much of its strength from certain affinities with science. We may distinguish the earlier and the later arguments as the positive and the normative cases for freedom.

The twentieth-century novelist-philosopher Ayn Rand put on record the most fully developed—though insufficiently detailed—normative argument for classical liberal ideas and ideals that dominate the discussion of the merits and liabilities of classical liberalism today. Earlier hints of such a defense were offered by John Locke and others in the natural law school of moral and political philosophy. In our time, Robert Nozick, Loren Lomasky, Douglas B. Rasmussen and Douglas J. Den Uyl, Fred D. Miller, Jr., Eric Mack, among others, and I have carried forth the normative tradition.

In contrast, the most persistent positive case in economics is made by Milton Friedman, given his direct treatment of certain methodological issues that serve as the philosophical foundation of such an approach to social philosophy, as well as some others in the field of positive political economy—for example, Gordon Tullock, David Friedman, the late George Stigler, and Gary Becker (the latter two both Nobel Laureates). The late Ludwig von Mises and F.A. Hayek have also produced non-normative

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

arguments, for classical liberal conceptions of human political economic life; as have the philosophers Jan Narveson and David Conway whose defenses are based on contract rather than national law.

In the classical liberal tradition, there has always been this division between the positive (or scientific) versus the normative (or moral) defenses of the free society with, of course, some shadings in between that are difficult to classify. Yet, in the earlier incarnations of the position, the positivist stance was clearly dominant. This stance can be traced, philosophically, to Thomas Hobbes as well as Baruch Spinoza, and includes such classical champions of the economic liberty as Adam Smith and David Ricardo. Positivists are still better positioned, academically, but their approach is no longer so widely championed. A few years ago one could encounter Milton Friedman and F. A. Hayek on "Meet the Press" and read Friedman regularly in *Newsweek*. Friedman still appears now and again on the editorial page of *The Wall Street Journal*. The same prominence is evident in the appointment of someone like Richard Posner as judge of the 7th District Court in Chicago, as well as by the number of Nobel Prizes received by economists who defend a free market system of economic arrangements for human communities. Books written by these social scientist champions of classical liberalism are well-published. We will shortly get to those who advance the moral defense, one that seems to be more widely championed, especially in the circles of scholars who discuss political theory and philosophy. In other words, if we take John Rawls as the philosophical representative of the social democratic—or modern liberal—welfare state, it is Nozick, Lomasky, Rasmussen, Den Uyl, and some others who are discussed as the classical liberal or libertarian counterpoints outside economics.

The social-scientific defense of freedom once had a better standing than the moral defense in the community of political inquirers. This is because the normative defense has seemed weak, flawed in light of the scientism of the last several centuries. A great deal of respect had been accorded to approaching a problem along lines similar to those spelled out in the natural sciences for reasons that are not difficult to appreciate. They promise rigor, exactitude, precision, and practical usefulness. They also suggested that complex human problems—psychological, ethical, political, etc.—could be dealt with in the proven ways of technology. The modern era's confidence in what B. F. Skinner called "the technology of culture" can be appreciated once one considers the rapid progress of the natural sciences and the resulting technological advances, along with the age old propensity of intellectuals to seek simple unifying systems of thought so as to make sense of reality. The persistent hope for the Archimedian point from which all problems could be solved, with adequate information at

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

hand, has sometimes lead philosophers of the highest quality to jump to hasty generalizations when they were inspired and excited enough about how we might go about solving pressing human problems.

For the last four hundred years in Western civilization, the scientific mode of thinking had been proven impressive, if only by way of its great productivity. It still is, of course, although there is now much dismay about the extrapolation methods used in the natural sciences to all other studies. Most of our technology, productivity, and the gadgets and technology we now take for granted are the results of science and among many this still sustains a confidence in applying universally the sort of thinking that seems to have made them possible. The hopefulness in social engineering can be accounted for by reference to the prevalence of scientific thinking, even scientism. Except for Immanuel Kant, few have attempted to abandon scientism. Kant did it at the cost of reinvigorating dualism, which has always been intellectually uncomfortable to accept because, among other reasons, of the problem of the interaction of two fundamentally different realms.

Another important reason why the positivist approach had been widely embraced is that the only powerful normative defense of liberalism had purged prudence from its midst. Kantianism, though normative and supportive of classical liberal institutions, had no solid place for the virtue of prudence, which might have been used to defend the classical liberal economic order, capitalism, on moral grounds.

Within the Kantian tradition of ethical thinking goals or results (that is, the ends or objectives of action) the virtues enabling one to reach them are deemed to be morally secondary. Doing what is right cannot be defended by reference to one's ends, only by reference to the dictates of a categorical imperative. Yet, if prudence—which aims at self-enhancement—is not a virtue, it is difficult to see how one could morally respect the activities that comprise much of the free market. There can be nothing seriously right about striving to make a profit, trying to prosper in life. Virtues such as frugality, industry, fortitude and such are unavailable as *bona fide* moral traits within the post-Kantian moral philosophical tradition.

Yes, some defenders of liberalism appear to find it sufficient, from the moral point of view, that in a liberal polity all interpersonal actions are carried out by mutual consent. Yet, this isn't sufficient because people can cooperate to their own moral detriment—e.g., when they exchange heroin for cocaine and proceed to abuse both drugs. Freedom is not really a personal virtue but a precondition of such virtues. As Hayek wrote:

> That freedom is the matrix required for the growth of moral values—indeed not merely one value among many but the source of all values—is almost self-evident. It is only where the individual has

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

> choice, and its inherent responsibility, that he has occasion to affirm existing values, to contribute to their further growth, and then earn moral merit.

Freedom is a precondition of personal virtue, of doing the morally right thing, rather than a virtue in itself. And unless liberal capitalist society can also claim for itself the achievement of fostering personal virtues, it will lack moral standing. The prominent older versions of classical liberalism, therefore, rested mainly on non-moral defenses of the system. And to date all prominent attacks on classical liberal institutions stress this point.

So the main reasons for the superior reputation of the positivist approach is that a lot of people have had great confidence in science. Even in our time, when popular discourse is filled with references to ethics, family values, the cowardice of terrorists and so forth, many academic intellectuals who support classical liberal ideals would not defend the position that there are objective moral or ethical truths.

Certain classical liberals, such as Richard Posner, have even embraced Richard Rorty's solidarist-relativist philosophical stance. And if we include among liberals the left-leaning welfare statists who do not quite wish to give up on some of liberalism's key ideas it is not difficult to see that their meager normative framework is closer to positivism than many realize. Rawls, for example, champions the intuitionist approach to ethics and by denying any significant role to free will, has no room for praise and blame within his moral framework.

This means that some of the very prominent defenders of the free society, whether in its pure libertarian or watered-down welfare statist version, have been and still are skeptical of making a moral case for their system on anything but an intuitive, subjective basis, one that clearly has no other implication than that the proponent prefers it.

For several centuries *bona fide* morality or ethics—as distinct from mere value theory—had been unseated from its prominence as part of humanistic studies. From ancient Greece until the Middle Ages, morality had been taken seriously, albeit often as a means to prepare people for the afterlife. The notion that human beings are the sort of creatures who can make choices between right and wrong, that they have the responsibility to do the right thing, and when they do wrong, they are blameworthy for this—had been very prominent in Augustine, Aquinas and even Ockham. It had been incorporated into broad teleological cosmology and metaphysics wherein the issue of what purposes or goals we ought to pursue made good sense. Later, however, human beings were seen by many as an utterly unique phenomenon—a hybrid of divine and mundane substance—

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

though, of course, everybody acknowledged that we bled, had to eat and did much that other animals did as well. Nevertheless, our having a mind appears to have been such a shocking, awesome fact that it was pretty much believed by intellectuals that human beings really are not ultimately of this earth. Augustine exclaimed:

> How great, my God, is this force of memory, how exceedingly great! It is like a vast and boundless subterranean shrine. . . . Yet this is a faculty of my mind and belongs to my nature; nor can I myself grasp all that I am. Therefore the mind is not large enough to contain itself. But where can that uncontained part of it be?

Thus the facts and principles that are of interest to human life as such—among them the facts and principles of ethics, morality, politics, etc.—were for many centuries considered to be related to spirituality. Arguably in the age of enormous scientific and technological success, this did not bode well for such concerns.

It had been relatively easy for Augustine, for example, *qua* ontologist, to make room for freedom of the will. He was not constrained by any loyalty to materialism, even though he was beginning to reject the influential dualist thinking of Manicheism. Even in our day, most people receive their ethical-moral teachings from church, not from science, and relate values in general to a supposed non-natural or spiritual realm. This is largely because the naturalistic framework is infected with a reductive materialist ontology and thus cannot yield a coherent account of human causal agency, purposiveness and ultimately, of moral responsibility.

As science gradually made its gains on this spiritualistic approach to human life (actually to an understanding of the whole universe) not only was the idealistic other-worldly focus beginning to recede for many of the most formidable minds but morality, too, became dethroned from its earlier lofty place. Ethics proper began to occupy a less prominent position in our educated, academic culture. Human beings were beginning to be viewed as just more complicated physical beings. Everything was ultimately thought of as governed by the principles of classical mechanics, that is, the physics which got its major expression in the work of Isaac Newton. In Hobbes, we have only moral psychology, not morality proper. In Locke, morality is squeezed in with great difficulty, as is free will. As with other luminaries of empiricism, morality is explained away in various causal terms—e.g., in David Hume and Adam Smith.

Thus the baby was thrown out with the bath water. To appropriate the study of nature, everything that even seemed otherworldly had been

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

abandoned. The Hobbesian notion, that human beings are by instinct inclined toward self-preservation, takes the laws of motion into the realm of psychology and ultimately social philosophy. This is the application of classical materialistic (meta)physics to politics: human beings in a state of nature, outside of civil society, are taken to be clusters of complex, intelligent matter, keeping in motion, attempting to survive. But since there are too many of them, they collide and repeated conflicts ensue. Once this happens, their higher form of material intelligence—something like a complex computer (one prominent model of the mind)—prompts them to make rules that will establish peace.

In other words, we are normally inclined, like billiard balls, to go on moving, living, but when we start colliding and our feedback system tells us, "Now, sit down and make some rules," we respond with the solution of the social contract. Once the rules are established, just as with traffic laws, they govern our continued movement or pursuit of self-preservation. So, essentially, the grandfather of much of liberal political-economy, Thomas Hobbes—and I say grandfather only because he was not quite liberal, laid the philosophical foundations of a certain version of liberalism—was a thoroughgoing (i.e., reductive) materialist who wanted to apply the principles of the physical sciences to everything. In our time this line of thinking is perhaps most forcefully and influentially advanced by Richard Dawkins.

In this scientistic perspective, the moral or ethical ideals we ought to promote—the language of blaming people for violating our rights for example, for holding them responsible for rape or assault or kidnapping or all the less serious crimes—are meaningless. No personal, moral responsibility could be involved in how things turn out (as so many claim today, from academic psychologists to guests on television talk shows).

Adam Smith, when he wrote *The Wealth of Nations*, essentially took the Hobbesian idea a step further. He held that not only are we all embarking on promoting our self-interest, but the less government there is, the better this system is going to work for our prosperity. This is so because government intervention and regulation amount to the introduction of friction into social life, unless all government does is keep the peace.

Accordingly, the whole notion of the free market system owes a great deal to this tradition of scientism, of lifting the principles of the physical sciences and applying them to human behavior. Subjectivism in ethics—the idea that all judgments of right and wrong are expressions of private feelings, preferences or desires—really is driven by this scientistic outlook. Scientism doesn't allow for objective moral values because the notion of right and wrong conduct doesn't make sense if no options exist and all we can do is what we have to. Even plain value judgments—as to whether

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

something is good or bad, e.g., a good apple or a bad heart—are deemed to be a matter of personal preference or aversion. Here is how Hobbes put the point originally: "But whatsoever is the object of any man's appetite or desire, that is it which he for his part calleth good: and the object of his hate and aversion, evil. . . . For these words of good and evil . . . are ever used with relation to the person that useth them: there being nothing simply and absolutely so; nor any common rule of good and evil. . . ."

Accordingly, right and wrong conduct, too, had been thought a matter of how a person takes it, no more, at least, so far as the economist is concerned with human behavior. Within pure economic analysis this stance could be quite appropriate. Since, however, economists have always been called upon to offer general commentary on political-economic matters, not just strict economic analyses, they have often taken this value-free framework with them into their studies and recommendations to government—environmental, racial, and other public policy topics. In these areas their value-free approach had always resonated badly with most people because, well, human life is necessarily normative, value-laden. But what was widely resisted by the public did not begin to become respectable until the late twentieth century. Logically, of course, such doubts should have been evident from the outset of scientism's popularity since the debate between positive and normative analysts rests on the underlying view that *there is a right and many wrong ways to thinking about human affairs*. Holding one's adversaries guilty of bad thinking is an inescapably normative point.

In the early twentieth century, even the few free-market economists who overtly attacked some versions of scientism reintroduced it by the back door, by modeling the market along lines of more complex physical systems. This is indeed a competing approach in our own time, what with so many efforts to model human social life on quantum mechanics, chaos theory, etc.

Despite what F.A. Hayek argued—that in fact the modeling went the other way, so that Charles Darwin adopted the framework of social scientists such as Adam Ferguson by which to understand natural phenomena—the basic grounding remained scientism. The social theory of Bernard Mandeville and David Hume had by that time been placed under the influence of a more complex version of scientism, one that retained the foremost ingredient of the earlier, mechanistic type—determinism, the denying of the possibility of free choice, self-governance or *bona fide* initiative in human life. For example, Ferguson held that we are motivated by "subrational drives." In turn, Hayek claimed that Ferguson, "with his phrase about the 'the results of human action but not of human design' has provided . . . the best definition of the task of all social theory."

The news is, however, that science, in contrast to scientism, and norms could well be perfectly compatible because the former must accept whatever

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

there is to be found in nature, including some beings the nature of which include a normative component or dimension, even a moral one. Thus Aristotle and those reviving his approach could call ethics a science because they are not being reductive in their approach to the sciences as scientism has always been.

At first scientism seemed to offer support for freedom because the idea was that without government regulation, coercion, and interference human beings would advance more rapidly toward self-preservation and self-enhancement.

In our day, however, a fairly vocal group of academic philosophers, taking their clues from a wide array of past moral and political thinkers, as well as recent science, have begun to revitalize the moral case for classical liberalism, one that had been largely silenced by scientism's earlier triumph. Mainly they have found that the scientistic view left us with serious dilemmas, especially when we set about attempting to defend the institutions it hoped to recommend. In short, the moral dimension of social life began to be seen as irrepressible.

This newly emerging moral viewpoint that has energized many classical liberals treats human beings as agents of their own conduct, as crucial first causes of some of what they do. Major problems have been associated with this idea in the past when efficient causation had been thought the only worthy kind of cause. Since with human beings the talk about what they ought to do has persisted, resisting all efforts to reconstruct moral language into some kind of technology, and since science has itself undergone major changes the prospects for a moral defense of free society are no better than they were in the past.

Moral talk doesn't appear to apply to other animals, although there are, of course, some who would say otherwise. It seems right that when a dog bites the mailman, we don't believe it ought not to have done that, even as we lament the fact. We don't treat the dog as a responsible agent, as if it could have made a different choice and thus mightn't have bitten the mailman. We do continue to treat human beings as responsible, not as robots or brutes, with no choice about what they will do.

The problem with the non-normative version of classical liberalism is when we consider the following: "Since, as liberalism sees it, governments obstruct progress, we should or ought to, or it is right for us to, reduce government intervention, so government intervention is wrong." So coercion, government regimentation, is unjust, be it in regards to matters of fighting crime, handling the suppression of dissident literature, or planning people's economic activities. While it seems inescapable for us to think and say such things, that kind of thinking and talk makes no sense within the scientistic framework.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Ironically, the champions of classical liberalism, influenced by this scientistic outlook, had deprived themselves, philosophically, of the ideas—namely, moral analysis and, in its wake, exhortation—that could possibly undermine government tyranny and intervention. If moral truth does not exist and its purported language is merely a guide for the expression of sentiments, preferences, biases, and tastes, it would follow that convincing others about what they ought or ought not to do can never be achieved. Preferences may change, but by this account, not because one is convinced they are wrong, that one ought to prefer something else.

In contemporary classical liberal or libertarian thought, all this has been understood to have a destructive impact on the prospect of human liberty. The notion, for example, that individuals have the right to liberty—that they have a right to trade their wares, to acquire property, to enter into and freely consent to a contract, to resist being stolen from, intruded upon or governmental prior restraint—makes no sense if someone who violates those rights is doing just what has to be done. It may be bad but it cannot be wrong! The indictments against such conduct become, then, expressions of our wishes. Of course, our wishes go against the wishes of those who do want to tyrannize us, intrude upon us, kill us, steal from and regulate us, but there is no valid issue of who is right and who is wrong because it all just happens, for better or for worse.

Freedom cannot be defended if it is not a genuine human option to respect people's right to freedom. Killing isn't even *murder*! It's merely homicide. Even criticism, as such, in philosophical or scholarly contexts, is nonsense: no one could do better or worse than he or she in fact does.

Classical liberalism today, at least at the hands of many philosophers who find promise in it, recognizes that if one views human beings as nothing other than automatons, instinctually-driven, material, pulsating things, then ultimately there is no way to say to them that what they are doing is wrong and they ought to change their ways, and they ought to, for example, pay compensation when they have done wrong—or even merely that they ought to apologize. That language, the language of norms, ethics, public policy and any kind of action guidance, is completely ruled out. It is no different from demonology, witchcraft, astrology or alchemy. Just as all those are bogus disciplines, so must political philosophy, political economy, ethics and public policy become bogus fields, if the scientistic approach is true.

But—and this is the crucial question to raise—is the scientistic approach sound? Or are these paradoxes fatal?

A further major problem with the scientistic approach is that it actually violates a most important tenet of science, which is that you judge by the evidence and do not impose a framework from some other area. If one

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

is studying the psychology of rats and applies the findings to teenagers, one is likely to go wrong.

We can take the findings of some of the sciences and apply some to other subjects, but it's a very delicate process, and throughout the last four hundred years of western civilization it has been driven more by hope than evidence. But, as we know, that hope has not been fulfilled.

What the current crop of classical liberal thinkers have come to see is that to make amends for the oversights of scientism it is necessary to become properly scientific.

This would first require understanding science as a process of discovery, not the laying down of prerequisites, which is the province of metaphysics and ontology, both of which are usually minimalist in their scope precisely for this reason: the prerequisites of existence (or being) are very few.

It would, furthermore, amount to the recognition that the human species has certain unique attributes, ones that cannot be derived from our understanding of other features of reality. We would learn that just because there are some characteristics we share with the rat, the computer or the north star, it doesn't follow that we are just like those entities, that we share their basic nature or essence. A proper scientific approach reveals that with the emergence of the human species some unique attributes have become manifest.

The foremost of these is that human beings can think and that this activity cannot be automatic. This seems like something we should know from plain common sense, something that should be obvious to any parent or teacher. Those who have dealt with children or students know that one cannot force them to think. That particular contribution to the rearing or educational process has to be provided by the child or student. *They have to will it to happen.* If they don't, it isn't going to happen. One can wear funny hats, sing songs, do all sorts of tricks but they are not going to pay attention until they choose to—it is up to them to do it.

More technical reflection also affirms this unique aspect of human beings. They produce ideas, theories, novelty throughout the parameters of their lives and none of that can be adequately explained by reference to mere external stimuli or genetic constitution. Human beings initiate some of what they do. Much of what is crucial to their lives is not simply the result of previous forces working on them.

The late psychophysicist Roger W. Sperry, who received the Nobel Prize in the 1950s for his split-brain experiments, argued in his book *Science and Moral Priority* that human beings have the kind of brain in which a higher portion monitors and controls much of human behavior, even when some portions of the lower brain might incline one in a set direction.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

That's also something we know from common sense: We have inclinations, desires, wishes and habits. But we can monitor these and we can guide ourselves away from or in line with them. We may want to eat more than we finally decide we should. So, we stop. That doesn't mean that our inclination isn't there. It means that our higher brain functions are capable of monitoring and altering our inclinations. This is what we call self-restraint, resisting temptation.

We can affirm human initiative without violating science or the tenets of coherence. So what are the broad political implications of this, if any? The contemporary liberal-libertarian would argue that we start by noticing that under most normal conditions, unless a person has been terribly abused or kept in a closet for the first twelve years of his or her life, human beings have the capacity for free choices, that they can actually can initiate some of their conduct, and that the conduct is not simply explainable by reference to past events. From this it follows that human beings have to learn to act because they are not given prompters, instincts, that tell them what to do. Put generally, we all, except for the crucially incapacitated, have to learn to live right.

This accords with many cultural practices throughout human societies and history. We send people to school. We don't expect them to acquire knowledge of chemistry or computer science or philosophy by instinct, in the way most birds and bees acquire their behavior. Birds don't forget to fly south—the bulk of them do not make a mistake and stay home. They don't have this problem. Human beings are the ones who can act badly or well, on their own initiative.

Furthermore, another implication of this understanding of human nature is that we are self-responsible creatures, that a great deal of what is important in our lives, we must produce on our own. We have to play a decisive role in what happens in our lives. If we don't, we don't learn. We don't realize the cost of mistakes. They come back to haunt us. This is evident in the discussion the topic at hand. If someone disagrees, the implication is that one has argued badly. If someone agrees, the implication is that one has argued correctly. Either way, one is held responsible.

When we consider what self-responsibility implies, the notion of liberty starts creeping into our vocabulary. It turns out that self-responsibility requires, in a community context, that people have their own private jurisdiction where both their achievements and their failures are within their own domain and not dumped on others. Here one sees the implications for environmental ethics and politics. Human beings, who are self-responsible, who can create as well as destroy, need to have their own dominion, their own private property wherein their achievements and mistakes take effect.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

For a legal system, that the institution of private property is essentially a humanistic institution. Everyone must have a private domain, a sovereign status within society, one that others must respect and governments are established to protect. It is appropriate to our nature as human beings not primarily, as economists argue, because it produces prosperity, not because it generates creativity, but mainly because it accords with our human nature as self-responsible, moral agents.

Throughout Western intellectual history, it has usually been religion that has stressed the moral nature of human life. Of course, Christianity borrowed this from the Greeks and Romans, who already had something of this in mind. Socrates emphasized the virtuous human life, as did Aristotle. And from that it follows that some measure of individual responsibility and liberty are necessary conditions of a just society. Both the secular natural-law tradition and the Christian tradition stress each person's responsibility for saving his or her soul, which pretty much implies the underlying framework of a free, liberal society. From the secular viewpoint, however, these implications were diverted and later even suppressed by scientism. And within the religious framework the zeal involved in making everyone conform to God's will often served to extinguish the liberal, libertarian implications.

In the last analysis, the free society has two strong traditions advancing its defense. The scientistic approach reigned supreme in earlier times; in ours the normative approach is gaining prominence. To decisively determine which of these is the better approach, which is true, is a topic for a more lengthy and detailed discussion. But we can already see that there is no obvious superiority to the scientistically inspired position that denies freedom of the will, ethics and normative politics in human life. It seems, also, that such a view stands a better chance of being a successful intellectual defense of the free society.

What can be said in reply to MacIntyre, if we take his comment at face value as a sincere lamentation about something possibly devious in the liberal tradition? For one, attempts at following Hobbes to reduce all understanding of human affairs to physics—which has today emerged as the extreme mathematization of economics and some other social sciences—could be taken as a ploy, a way to avoid the hard questions. Put plainly, by making all human action driven by the profit motive or utility maximization, the question of whether it is right or good to vigorously pursue profit is avoided. If wealth maximization is an innate drive, if survival is such an innate drive, *á la* Richard Dawkins, then no one needs to prove that it is a good thing and the argument is over before it begins. Then, also, a subjective value theory enables us to skip a lot of tough issues in ethics and politics and the view that such a theory leads to liberalism becomes, once again, a kind of ploy.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Yet it appears that MacIntyre's ire is highly selective: essentially normative theses in scientistic garb had been advanced on all fronts, whether socialist or liberal. However once the contemporary normative case for liberalism is fully appreciated, it can be seen as a very promising, non-utopian yet hopeful attempt to understand human community life, and not at all inconsistent with proper science or reasonable moral sensibilities.

Richard Garner: Thank you, Professor Machan. Next we will hear from Gunther Stent, Professor Emeritus of Neurobiology at the University of California at Berkeley. His topic will be "The Master and his Atelier."

Gunther Stent: The social structure of the workplaces of experimental science and of painting—laboratory and atelier—changed towards the end of the nineteenth century. With the advent of professionalism in science, the laboratory grew from the traditional lone-scientist's studio into a factory (where a team of researchers worked under the direction of a master-scientist). Concurrently, upon the advent of modernism in art, the atelier shrunk from a factory (where a team of painters worked under the direction of a master-painter) to a lone-painter studio. Here, I will describe these reciprocal structural transformations of the workplaces of experimental science and painting at the *fin du dix-neuvième siècle* and outline what became of them by the *fin du vingtième siècle*.

The philosophical roots of the modern scientific laboratory can be traced to Elizabethan England, where the courtier Francis Bacon called for an experimental interrogation of Nature. This interrogation was to be implemented by observations done, not *in* Nature, under natural conditions, but out of Nature, in the laboratory under artificially contrived, deliberately controlled conditions.

One of the first Baconian laboratories was dedicated to physiological research, set up by Bacon's doctor, William Harvey. He showed by surgical manipulations of the vascular system of experimental animals that the heart is a pump that drives blood circulation. Soon thereafter, Otto von Guericke and Evangelista Toricelli set up laboratories for physical research, in which they carried out experiments that proved the existence of the vacuum. Toward the end of the eighteenth century, Antoine Lavoisier established a chemical laboratory in Paris, which he financed by money he received as a partner of one of the notorious "tax farming" companies of the *Ancien Régime*. Lavoisier, one of the founders of modem chemistry, discovered the role of oxygen in combustion, and elucidated the general importance of oxidation-reduction processes in chemistry and physiology. All of these pre-nineteenth century experimentalists worked alone in their laboratories, aided at most by one or two paid assistants, or, as in the case of Lavoisier, by their spouse.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

The social structure of scientific research underwent a radical change at the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Wilhelm von Humboldt established a novel type of institution of higher learning in Berlin, namely the modern research university. Whereas, ever since its founding in the late Middle Ages, the function of the traditional university had been teaching, professors at the research university were charged with combining scholarly instruction with scholarly research. Thus scholarly research became a full-time professional career, and scientists mutated from independent gentlemen-investigators into salaried civil-servants.

The rise of university-based research facilities brought about the expansion of the laboratory from a lone-scientist's studio to a factory presided over by a professor as master-scientist, who directed the work of a few, minimally salaried post-doctoral assistants as journeymen, and a bevy of advanced students as apprentices. The professor set the research agenda and assigned the problems on which the journeymen and student-apprentices worked. Eventually, the ablest of the journeymen became the master-scientists of the next generation.

The prototypical factory laboratory was established at the University of Giessen in the mid-nineteenth century by Justus Liebig, then Germany's foremost chemist. Liebig, one of the founders of organic chemistry, devised the first methods for the structural analysis of organochemical compounds. Later, he also laid the foundations for the discipline of biochemistry, by recognizing that organisms derive the energy needed for the generation of body heat and metabolism from the oxidation of foodstuffs, especially carbohydrates and fat.

It makes good sense that it was an organic chemist like Liebig who set up the first team-operated scientific laboratory: Organochemical research lends itself particularly well to the method of running an assembly-line factory. The master *Organiker* lays down the original concept of the research project and each chemist-assistant works out some particular detail: One adds an amino group to the molecule here, another removes a carboxy group from it there. As Liebig's fame spread throughout Europe, students flocked to his laboratory from all over, among them such future master-chemists as F.A. Kékulé, M.J. Pettenkofer, and R.A.C.E. Erlenmeyer. Liebig thus became the intellectual father of most of the outstanding late nineteenth and early twentieth century organic chemists.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century, the rise of organized laboratory research in the universities and the availability of trained experimenters had made possible the quick exploitation by research teams of novel scientific ideas with practical applications. For example, from the 1870s onwards, Adolph von Baeyer, one of Liebig's intellectual grandchildren (via Kékulé), ran a highly successful chemical laboratory at the University of Munich. In addition to making many contributions to

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

fundamental organic chemistry, von Baeyer and his assistants also synthesized the first aniline dyes and pharmaceuticals, which laid the foundation for the German chemical industry. By the beginning of the twentieth century, the success of university-based laboratories in fostering basic as well as applied science had led to the establishment of non-teaching research laboratories run by professional scientists who were not, or were no longer, academics.

At first, physics didn't seem to lend itself to the novel factory-style laboratory research mode. Relatively simple, home-made equipment still sufficed for doing incisive physical experiments, and there seemed to be little profit for master-physicists in farming out detail work to assistants. That situation changed, however, in the early years of the twentieth century, when Ernest Rutherford established a laboratory for research in atomic physics, first at Manchester University and later in the University of Cambridge's Cavendish Laboratory. As master-minded by Rutherford, atomic physics resorted to ever-more complex and expensive equipment and ever-larger research teams, eventually culminating in the mega-laboratories of the Manhattan District Project that arose during World War II. Rutherford's students comprised a brilliant crew, including James Chadwick (the discoverer of the neutron); Hans Geiger (the eponymous inventor of the first atomic particle counter); Henry Moseley (who originated the concept of atomic numbering that brought Mendeleev's table of the elements into conformance with atomic structure and who was said to have been the most brilliant of Rutherford's brilliant young men); Georg von Hevesy (inventor of radioactive tracers); John Cockroft (inventor of the first atom-smashing particle accelerator); and Niels Bohr (who devised the quantum-theoretical model of the atom).

In the late 1920s, Bohr established his own institute for atomic studies at the University of Copenhagen. It became the focus of the revolution in our understanding of nature set off by the development of quantum mechanics, which raised philosophical doubts about the nature of physical reality at the atomic level. Bohr's star disciples included Werner Heisenberg, the co-inventor of quantum mechanics; Paul Dirac, the discoverer of the electron's positively charged twin, the positron; and Wolfgang Pauli, who formulated the quantum-mechanical exclusion principle, which states that at any particular energy level, an atom can have only two electrons, one spinning clockwise and the other counterclockwise.

Bohr was one of the master scientists whose influence extended far beyond their own laboratories and disciples, and functioned as arbiters of quality for entire disciplines. They held sway over their colleagues, not so much by virtue of the temporal power derived from appointments,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

research grants, and prizes, as by virtue of their spiritual power, derived from their apparent incorruptibility and integrity and their knack for identifying the major scientific problems in want of solution. It was a major function of theirs to set the proper tone. In addition to deriving inspiration and incisive criticism from Bohr, his cadre of atomic physicists also imbibed (and felt bound to practice) his "Copenhagen Spirit" of friendship and cooperation. Though all but a few scientists will profess the shibboleths of friendship and cooperation, they are more often honored in their breach in disciplines that lack a Bohr-like master, who can keep order among his disciples by dint of his generally accepted moral authority.

I myself imbibed the Copenhagen Spirit secondhand, when I became a disciple of Niels Bohr's disciple, Max Delbrück, at Caltech in the late 1940s. The main research focus of Delbrück's laboratory was on the mechanism of genetic self-replication, and it attracted many of the first generation leaders of molecular biology before that discipline, which would revolutionize life sciences in the twentieth century, even had a name. Delbrück's disciples included James Watson, the discoverer of the DNA double helix; Renato Dulbecco, the founder of quantitative animal virology; Seymour Benzer, who reformulated the classical, abstract and incoherent notion of the gene as a concrete molecular-genetic concept; and Niels Jerne, who revolutionized immunology by putting forward his natural selection theory of antibody formation.

It was largely Delbrück's influence that raised molecular biology to a higher intellectual and ethical plane than biochemistry, which had many laboratories in which excellent work was being done but lacked masters with Delbrück's dominating presence. He brought order to molecular biology by becoming its conscience. "What will Max think of it?" had become the *Gretchenfrage* of the molecular-biological psyche, and receiving his praise counted more for his disciples' self-esteem than prizes, promotions and election to academies. Since Max would see through all dirty tricks, his approval could not be obtained by unethical or unmannerly conduct, such as stealing ideas, exploiting students, or demanding honorary authorship. Neither would he tolerate taking shortcuts, such as drawing unsubstantiated conclusions from complex experiments or putting forward incoherent theories, which might fool prize juries or academy members.

At the close of the twentieth century, almost all of the old master scientists have disappeared, and, as far as I can tell, few young master scientists have turned up to take their place. By this I don't mean to imply that there are no more excellent scientists at work. On the contrary, there are more of them than ever, running laboratories where well-trained, competent students and postdocs are hard at work to make a mark for themselves. What I do mean is that there are not many working scientists left who exert

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

much spiritual power over their disciplines. However personally and professionally ethical prominent latter-day scientists may be, they have lost the halo of incorruptibility and unimpeachable integrity that many of their predecessors once projected. In fact, it seems pretentious nowadays for a senior scientist to act as the exemplar of an admirable person worth emulating, when the role of arbiter of integrity and good manners in scientific conduct has been taken over by impersonal organs such as the U.S. Public Health Service's Office of Research Integrity.

Moreover, there are few old-time factory-style laboratories left in which apprentices are trying to make the master's style their own, for two paradoxical reasons. On the one hand, students are under pressure for an early demonstration of their originality, as epitomized in caricature by the Westinghouse Talent Search Awards to American high school students. And on the other, few laboratory chiefs still have distinctive research styles of their own.

Painting developed in the opposite direction. Factory ateliers with master-painters supervising assistants and apprentices had already existed in ancient Egypt, where they were often attached to royal palaces or temples. And in ancient Rome, large teams of anonymous painters and sculptors—many of them Greek slaves toiling in big state-owned ateliers—turned out the reproductions through which much of classical Greek art has come down to us. The Imperial ateliers disappeared with the fall of Rome, and in the early Middle Ages, master-artists and their assistants turned into itinerant artisans. The churches and castles where they found commissions were their temporary workplaces.

Master painters reestablished their own factory ateliers under the more settled conditions of the High Middle ages. They joined the then recently formed professional guilds, usually in association with craftsmen such as glassblowers, goldsmiths, or apothecaries. The guilds regulated how the master had to run his atelier, specifying the number of allowable journeymen-assistants and apprentices. The role of a beginning apprentice was limited to housekeeping and routine supporting tasks, such as grinding pigments and preparing oils. In return, the master was obliged to provide artistic training for his apprentices, who, once they had caught on to the basic techniques, would be allowed to help with outlining the overall design of a picture and, eventually, render some of its details. Upon demonstrating that they had learned enough, the apprentices qualified as journeymen.

At the dawn of the Renaissance, the ateliers still retained the structure of the medieval guild workshop. The apprentices started their careers by imitating their master's style, and most of them continued to paint in his style, their works remaining anonymous and later being attributed by experts to "School of . . ." The most talented journeymen eventually

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

developed their own styles, founded their own ateliers, and became masters in their own right.

This atelier system was possible because technical, stylistic or thematic originality was neither expected nor prized at the outset of a painter's career. What *was* expected of a future master was *educated* originality steeped in learned tradition rather than *ignorant* originality arising autonomously from innate genius. It should be noted, however, that the medieval atelier system was not universally carried over into the Renaissance. Leonardo, for instance, worked alone, without help from assistants or apprentices. His notion, eccentric in its time, that the artist needs solitude anticipated the lone-painter studio of the modern master.

Peter Paul Rubens still ran an archetypical factory atelier in seventeenth century Antwerp, whose assembly-line production methods resulted in a prodigious output of high quality paintings. Rubens laid down his original concept for a picture in a preliminary sketch or cartoon. He also executed the most vital details, such as the face, or assigned them to a highly accomplished journeyman, such as the future master, Anthony van Dyck. The rest—the subject's shoes or his hat—was done by assistants, just as one of Liebig's chemist-assistants added an amino group to the molecule here and another removed a carboxy group from it there. The price Rubens charged for a painting rose with the amount of work he had personally invested in it.

By Rubens's time, however, the traditional atelier system had already begun to decline with the founding of art academies. They took over the training of aspiring painters in formalized courses of instruction, thus depriving the masters of their apprentices. The academies also replaced the medieval guilds as regulators of the profession, with official appointments and commissions tending to be reserved for their members. The academicians' idea of artistic pedagogy was to teach their students the classical ideal of ancient Greek art as the esthetic *ne plus ultra* and to minimize the achievements of post-Renaissance art.

With the rising Romanticist urge for unfettered self-expression at the end of the eighteenth century, many painters came to view the academies as just as stultifying as the guilds they had replaced. So a new type of atelier came into being, in which a master taught his personal style to paying students, rather than apprentices taken in to help him with his own work. One of the most influential of these teaching ateliers was that of Jacques Louis David, anointed as Napoleon's *premier peintre*. At its height, David's atelier had about sixty students, who cherished the cachet of being an *élève de David*.

The mega-teaching atelier started to disappear in the latter part of the ninteenth century, when a new breed of painters, the Modernists, came to dominate the artistic scene. They made the capture of reality—the modern, workaday world as they saw it, warts and all—the touchstone of their art,

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

in contrast to their Romantic predecessors, who eschewed the vulgar and the banal and were always mooning about an idealized world, one that was exotic or heroic. The Modernists, after Monet and Cézanne, worked alone, either outdoors or in modest, small studios. To them it had become a source of shame rather than pride—a mark of lack of originality—for the work of a young artist to be identifiable as belonging to the "school of . . ." Thus while the lone modernist masters were setting novel styles in small studios rather than in large ateliers with paid assistants or paying students, they left the training function to the maligned academies or to art schools.

At about the time that large ateliers were disappearing, a novel type of influential painter appeared, to whom I shall refer as "guru." The guru's role was more inspirational than style-setting, with his atelier serving as a parlor rather than a workshop for his devotees. The first of these painter-gurus was Edouard Manet, who became the intellectual fountainhead of the new generation of Independents. Manet's parlor-atelier was frequented not only by the leading young impressionist painters, such as Claude Monet, Paul Cézanne, Edgar Degas, and Jean Renoir, but also by the leading literary figures of the day, such as Charles Baudelaire, Emile Zola and Stéphane Mallarmé.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a novel working setting for painters sprang up in the run-down Paris quarter of Montmartre: the atelier commune formed by several hard-up artists who shared cheap working space in a decrepit building yet worked independently. One of these communes was the Bateau Lavoir, a sprawling wooden hut without gas, electricity or water. It owes its fame to having been the site at which *Les Demoiselles d'Avignon* was painted in 1904 by the penniless Pablo Picasso, recently arrived from Spain. Unlike the great masters of the 17th century, such as Rubens and Rembrandt, Picasso was to produce his prodigious output of pictures without assistants or students. A typical master of modernity, Picasso worked alone.

By the middle the twentieth century, an enormous stylistic diversification of modernist painting had taken place. Novel styles had turned up at ever-shorter intervals and lasted for ever-shorter periods, with action painting and Pop Art providing late examples of this vast aesthetic embranchment. Finally, towards the end of the twentieth century, there arrived the artistic era of "stylistic stasis" that Leonard Meyer had predicted in the 1960s and which came to be known as post-modernism. Post-modern painters make anachronistic use of past styles, a practice that had formerly been considered corrupt, contemptible, and dishonest from the purview of Western cultural beliefs about originality and creation, causation and history.

Are there any painters left in the era of stylistic stasis who could still be designated meaningfully as "master painter?" One candidate proposed for this title was Andy Warhol, of whom it was said that "What Manet did

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

for modernism, Warhol has done for post-modernism." (Smith, 1988). The huge studio that Warhol ran in Manhattan from the mid-1960s until his death in 1987 may, at first glance, have seemed to be something like a master's atelier, since it was the epicenter of New York's Pop Art scene.

Warhol called his studio " the Factory" because of the stupendous volume of painting and film making that went on in it. But the Factory's main renown has been attributed to its serving as "a combination clubhouse, community center, lounge and cruising area and stamping ground for some of New York's more outlandish types—preening fashion models, ranting amphetamine heads, sulky poets, underground movie makers, and imperious magazine editors." (Bourdon, 1989). The term "post-modern master" may be an oxymoron.

There is no use bemoaning the vanishing of the good old times. The advent of post-modernism did not happen haphazardly; it is rooted in the profound changes that occurred in personal values, ambitions and beliefs. Most of us probably consider these changes to be benign advances over the stultifying mores and conventions of the past, changes that outweigh whatever noxious effects they may have had on artistic and scientific creativity. Yet, all the same, for our understanding of the present, we need to take stock of what has been lost.

One loss incurred by the postmodern disappearance of masters in science and art is the waning of the spiritual dimension that used to be a major social role of these two principal spheres of human creative activity. With almost no masters left to project a halo of incorruptibility and to serve as arbiters of good manners and taste, science and art have turned into mundane occupations, whose value is judged more by their cost-effectiveness in achieving technological advance or populist acclaim than by their contributions to the general cultural level of society.

Two recent actions of the U.S. Congress exemplify this devolution of spiritual value. One example is the cancellation of the Superconducting Super Collider in Texas midway during its construction, after many millions of dollars had already been spent on it. Congress judged that the expected practical benefits of this most costly megaproject in the history of science do not warrant its expense, even though its cancellation means the end of vanguard experimental research at the frontiers of nuclear particle physics. Another example is the slashing of congressional appropriations for the National Endowment for the Arts, on the grounds that much of the art it supports lacks authentic aesthetic value.

It would be a mistake to trivialize these developments by simply attributing them to the stupidity or want of cultural vision of political hacks in Washington. More likely, the deeper cause of these by no means unreasonable Congressional decisions is the cultural *Zeitgeist* of the masterless *fin du vingtième siècle*.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Richard Garner: Thank you, Professor Stent. Who would like to start the discussion?

Susan Haack: I'd like to, by reminding the chairman and the rest of you of that nice Leibnizian riddle: "What's the difference between an optimist and a pessimist?—They both think this is the best of all possible worlds." I think there is such a thing as honest inquiry, it is possible to find out by investigation how things are. So I think I am the optimist; unlike Richard Rorty, Steve Fuller, etc., who say it's all a matter of solidarity, it's all politics, there *is* no such thing as honest inquiry.

Since Professor Machan and I both used the word "scientific," but not in the same way, I am somewhat uneasy about having given no explanation of how I used the word. "Scientific" is ambiguous; the word has two quite different uses. One is descriptive, used simply to refer to those disciplines classified as sciences by deans, librarians, etc.—physics but not philosophy, chemistry but not history, and so on. But "scientific" also has an honorific use, as an all-purpose term of epistemic praise, meaning "strong, reliable, good." That's why people studying management, librarianship, etc., want their disciplines to be called "Management Science," "Library Science," etc.—because of the halo effect of the honorific usage, which has grown up because of the successes of the natural sciences. I used the word descriptively.

This leads me to Professor Stent's paper, which I think has more in common with what I had to say than appeared on the surface. The natural sciences have achieved remarkable successes. That's why we use the word "scientific" in an honorific way. But there is no guarantee that this success will continue. Its continuing success depends on sustaining intellectual integrity, which is fragile. I have begun to wonder about those words, "integrity," "wholeness." Why do we call intellectual integrity by a word which connotes wholeness? Because it is a matter of the intellect and the will working together rather than pulling against each other—so that one is motivated not by one's wishes, hopes or fears, but by a genuine desire to figure things out. The concept of intellectual integrity, much neglected by epistemologists, seems to me more and more important; and intellectual integrity itself seems to me more and more an ideal, achievable but difficult. We disregard the conditions under which it flourishes at our peril. So in another sense, I suppose I am a pessimist. I do see the possibility of the jungle of irrationality closing around us if we don't understand and keep hold of that fragile wholeness of intellect and will.

Speaker: Russians are good riddlers too. They ask what's the difference between a pessimist and an optimist and the answer is that the pessimist thinks things can't get any worse and the optimist thinks they can.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Tibor Machan: I just want to add one thing about this term "liberal," like the term "liberty" it has some genuinely different uses. If I am free of a headache I am free in a certain sense. If I am free of poverty or illness, or free of worries, I am free in a certain sense. That is not the sense of "freedom" that is usually associated with politics in the classical liberal tradition, where "free" means that no one is intruding upon me by thwarting my behavior or my conduct. Classical liberals emphasize this latter sense of the term "free." Modern liberals, on the other hand, use the term liberal in the sense of being free of poverty, free of worry, free of hindrances. That's why they can honestly claim also to be in the liberal tradition.

Marx also argued that *bourgeois* freedom is not enough, that we need *human* freedom. This human freedom is supposed to be the enablement we often talk about: empowerment, not just freedom from other people's intrusiveness. Once intrusiveness has gone away, we also need the liberating action of the state or the community to steer us in the right direction and enable us to grow and develop. That's why it's not entirely accurate to say that the modern liberals kidnapped the term "liberal" from the classical liberals. Indeed there is a sense in which classical liberals gave the initial impetus for this conceptual alteration by treating human beings as moved by forces outside them, rather than being capable of initiating any action on their own. If you think of human beings as essentially physical parts of nature, then you need to give them a push when they aren't moving. Whereas if you think of human beings as having something like free will, each of them can take the initiative and move forward on his or her own. In that case modern liberalism is a misconceived "corrective" to classical liberalism.

Gunther Stent: I would like to respond to the claim that Machiavelli was scientistic. On the contrary. He is a hero of mine exactly because I consider him an anti-scientistic political philosopher. That is why, as pointed out by Isaiah Berlin, Machiavelli has been hated across the whole spectrum of religious, philosophical, and political thought. Machiavelli showed that the ensemble of our aims is rationally inconsistent. He was pragmatic, but not scientistic.

Tibor Machan: Well, I think that calling him scientistic would be wrong because he did not have a robust enough world view to address the issues that make one scientistic. Someone like Hobbes, for example, is more scientistic than Machiavelli. At the same time there are certain methodological procedures that Machiavelli employs which intimate that we *cannot* argue about ends or goals of political action. The only thing that we can really talk about rationally is means to given ends, ends that are set, ends that history reveals all political institutions to aim for. Machiavelli studies history in order to find out what the Spanish did, what the Italians

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

did, and then says that in order for us to reach set ends effectively, we have to use certain methods.

Gunther Stent: Machiavelli did more than discover that all political institutions aim for ends. He showed that the ensemble of ends they aim for is rationally inconsistent. Hence there are no means for realizing *any* version of the City of God in the sublunar sphere.

Sandra Velasquez: I have two points to make. The first point concerns the discussion of dystopia and utopia. Assuming that there is an inherent instinct in man to heal himself, to comfort himself, to shelter himself against physical or emotional upsets and also assuming that this is inherent in all human societies world-wide, is it not feasible that this threat, or dismay placed upon the composure of man in mankind will eventually lead him to act upon this dismay? Perhaps the modern disillusionment will lead to a new kind of social movement, whether it be artistic, political, or something else. This is possible only when there is an ideal, even an utopian ideal, that drives such a movement. Social indifference and passivity in this array can only last for so long.

The second point refers to Susan Haack's discussion on ethics and philosophy. It is often said that the question is as important, if not more important than the answer itself. In a society that is leaning more and more toward quick and easy answers, toward brevity of language, toward generalization, art and talent that is well-researched, as well as deep inquiry, seem to be in danger of becoming obsolete. Do you think it is possible that self-declared philosophers who honestly want no claim to fame or profit would be the ones to keep alive the craft of subtly questioning their environment? I believe that those few today who still feel strongly about the Socratic method of questioning and about a not-for-profit search for truth, this minority of thinkers which dwells more in the streets than in high-class institutions, will fight for questioning with passion, in an age that looks to offer only easy access and thoughtless answers.

Susan Haack: When I go to the American Philosophical Association meetings, which I find myself obliged to do at least once a year, I do it with great reluctance, and I often come home, frankly, in despair. But when a graduate student who has been trying to figure out something difficult for six months and has been reporting for most of that time, "oh dear, I'm going round in circles," and I have had to tell him, "I'm sorry, you're right, it's not working"—when such a student calls me at nine o'clock on a Sunday evening and says "Oh my God, I think I've got it"—*then* I feel hope. There *are* people out there doing real work and figuring things out; some of them are even at the APA, but it can be hard to find them in the crowd.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Douglas Rasmussen: Professor Haack, to what extent does your distinction between real inquiry and pseudo-inquiry and your desire for investigators to manifest integrity have to do with a connection between a deeper theory of ethics and virtue ethics?

Susan Haack: I am not thinking in terms of any party lines in recent discussions in ethics. It's not quite manifest in what I said, but it's not far from the surface, that we need to talk in terms *both* of virtue *and* of duty. There is something (not necessarily the most important thing) wrong with the character of a person whose intellectual integrity is shaky. He may be really nice to his wife and children and his dog, he may be absolutely honest on his tax return and so forth, but still there is something about him which falls short of what a human being would ideally be. But it is also the case that some of us have a special obligation to intellectual integrity. All of us who are academics have an obligation to engage in inquiry and to do it honestly. Not everybody has this obligation, but we do. Someone who failed melodramatically in a duty of this kind, in my recent experience, was a lawyer who advised a friend of mine, an antique dealer who fell into the trap into which antique dealers are apt to fall, buying stolen goods. This lawyer's advice was, "Look, you bought goods which were stolen; that's an offense; you'd better plead guilty." I ran around desperately to find out what the law really was, because I knew this couldn't be right. And of course it wasn't; the offense is *knowingly* buying stolen goods. The lawyer had, surely, failed in a duty to know. And we academics also have a special duty to inquire, not to speak before we know, or, if we have to speak before we know, to *say*, "I'm not sure." A full understanding of the ethics of intellect requires *both* the vocabulary of duty *and* the vocabulary of virtue. I am not convinced that one must choose between the two, as opposed to trying to understand how they fit together.

Speaker: My second question is to Professor Stent, and is a comment about Machiavelli. It seems to me that Machiavelli discovered what Isaiah Berlin called "value pluralism," the distinct differences among people. He was concerned about the aim of politics trying to make virtue as its end, and argued for some other aim. Regrettably the modernists tend to take that as a separation of the political from the ethical. I believe what Professor Machan was suggesting is that the earlier version, what he called the scientistic version of liberalism, bought into the package deal that Machiavelli presented. Namely that if you reject the aim of virtue as the aim of politics then you must reject any connection between politics and a deeper ethical and ontological view.

Gunther Stent: My struggle against the categorization of Machiavelli as "scientistic" derives from my understanding of the commonly accepted meaning of "scientism," namely the belief that the logical premises and

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

methods of inquiry of the natural sciences are applicable to all domains of human interest. The example of Machiavelli's latter-day detractor, Karl Marx, whose outlook was nothing if not scientistic but who believed that there is, or ought to be, a connection between politics and ethics, shows that one can be beholden to scientism without rejecting virtue as the aim of politics. And the counterexample of Confucian political philosophy shows that one can reject virtue as a political aim while being a total stranger to scientism.

Speaker: Yes. But I think the point that Professor Machan was getting at is that to understand what order and liberty are, or peace and order, you have to get beyond the mechanistic scientistic view point to have a deeper view about human beings.

Richard Garner: I want to add that Machiavelli, who certainly at times felt himself to be an unjustly neglected advisor, would be delighted at his ability to so magnetically distract us from discussion of the twenty-first century.

Dmitri Urnov: Professor Stent, can it be that your idea of a masterless state in the realm of science, art, and literature could lead to a fundamental re-evaluation of the history of modern art, literature, and science? We see the decline of craft or rather a violation of the principle of consistency which Niels Bohr thought to be integral for science—that every step should incorporate the previous one, not reject it. Similarly, in art or literature, later masters could do what earlier masters could accomplish, while post-modern artists do not possess the craftsmanship of previous masters. Picasso could work in the traditional manner and in his own modernist, avant-garde manner while Andy Warhol could not paint or draw.

Richard Garner: It is late, and I have to end this session. But I think it is the appropriate time for us all to thank Professor Kurzweil for the massive amount of work it took her to bring us all together.

Edith Kurzweil: Thank you all for coming. Anything I could say now would be an anticlimax. We will print the proceedings in *Partisan Review*'s April 1997 issue. Now, I want to thank everybody for coming, particularly the participants, most of whom traveled from far away. I also want to thank the Advisory Board of *Partisan Review*, the Austrian Cultural Institute, and Adelphi University for having made the whole thing possible, and Diane Cavarra for having helped me put it all together. Thank you all.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

Coming in
Partisan Review:

- Mario Vargas Llosa: *The Truth of Lies*
- *Rethinking Sexual Harrasment* by Elizabeth Fox-Genovese
- Jean-François Sirinelli on Sartre and Aron
- Fiction Chronicle by Millicent Bell
- Heidi Urbahn de Jauregui on Thomas Mann
- New fiction by Jon Surgal
- Poetry by Allen Grossman, Heather McHugh, Eugenio Montale, W.S. di Piero, Michael Benedikt, and others.

NEW IN PAPERBACK

The Private Worlds of Marcel Duchamp

Desire, Liberation, and the Self in Modern Culture

by Jerrold Seigel

"[Seigel] reads Duchamp's work against its social and cultural background. . . [and] argues convincingly that the American reaction to Duchamp's work—which was a highlight of the famous 1913 Armory Show—offered him unanticipated and decisive encouragement."
—*San Francisco Chronicle*

$18.95 paper, illustrated, at bookstores
or order 1-800-822-6657.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA PRESS

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

INCHARDI

Novels by J. Inchardi
$20.00 each

Lines On The Death Of A Fisherman

Three Jews In A Tub

Dreamship

Yurros

A Paper Toy

Intercurse

Jehovah Mafioso

Saturn Maru

Drek Shlak

Om Budsman

The Execution Of Comrade X

The Resurrection Of Philippe D.

The Ascent Of Maryam

I Reach Over Now

Morning In Snug Harbor

Order from **Sirius Books**
P.O. Box 177
Freeport, Maine 04032

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

S U B

S T A N C E

FREE!

RETURN THIS AD AND RECEIVE A FREE SAMPLE ISSUE.

Editors: Sydney Lévy
Michel Pierssens

Published: 3 / yr.
ISSN: 0049-2426

Promotes new thoughts by leading American and European authors which alter the perception of contemporary culture–be it artistic, humanistic, or scientific. Represents literary theory, philosophy, psychoanalysis, art criticism, and film studies.

Substance is published by the University of Wisconsin Press and edited at the University of California at Santa Barbara with the support of the College of Letters and Science and the Department of French and Italian.

Rates:

Individuals (must pre-pay):	$25 / yr.
Institutions:	$80 / yr.
Foreign postage:	$ 8 / yr.
Airmail:	$25 / yr.

We accept MasterCard and VISA. Canadian customers please remit 7% Goods and Services Tax.

Please write for a *free* back issue list:

Journal Division, University of Wisconsin Press,
114 North Murray Street, Madison, WI 53715 USA

Or call, 608-262-4952, FAX 608-265-5277

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

NEW BOOKS

The Paper Trail: A Recollection of Writers
by Dorothea Straus
Vivid, personal portraits of nineteen writers, including Isaac Singer, Jerzy Kosinski, and Lillian Hellman. "Straus's eyes are sharp, but her memory is faithful and in its honesty kind." —*The New York Times Book Review*

The Only Piece of Furniture in the House
a novel by Diane Glancy
"A powerful meditation on the manner in which religious and earthly love may reinforce one another, offering something sustaining 'beyond the plainness of our lives.'" —**Kirkus Reviews**

In the War for Peace
a novel by C. N. Hetzner
A novel about sex, drugs, and rock 'n roll, set in the 60s " . . . is a part of the fabric of those years, by an author who is a masterful word weaver. This is a pretty scary book." —*Eugene McCarthy*

at your local bookstore or call 888-789-1945 toll free

MOYER BELL

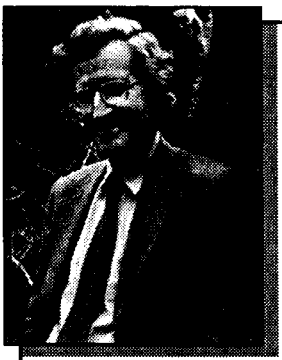
LIBERALISM AT THE CROSSROADS:
A Conference In Honor Of
Arthur Schlesinger, jr.

Friday, May 16, 1997
10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

MULTICULTURALISM
With **Stanley Crouch**, **John Brenkman**, **Annie Cohen-Solal** and **Todd Gitlin**
THE HISTORIAN AS PUBLIC INTELLECTUAL
With **Hugh Thomas**, **William Leuchtenburg** and **Gertrude Himmelfarb**
THE COLD WAR, VIETNAM AND AMERICA
With **Paul Berman**, **Frances FitzGerald**, **Michael Lind**, **Conor Cruise O'Brien**, and **Ronald Steel**

FREE AND OPEN TO THE PUBLIC
The Harold M. Proshansky Auditorium
CUNY Graduate School and University Center
33 West 42nd Street, NYC
For more information: 212-642-2684
Supported by a generous gift from Henry and Edith Everett

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED



NOAM CHOMSKY

A Life of Dissent

Robert F. Barsky

"For over thirty years Noam Chomsky has been a pathbreaking linguist and a controversial critic of American policies and politics. Indeed, the world seems to divide between those who revere and those who revile Chomsky. Both groups would find valuable Robert F. Barsky's appreciative biography; he recounts (the known and the little known) facts of Chomksy's life, evaluates his linguistic contribution and surveys the main quarrels. This is an essential book not only for Chomsky aficionados and adversaries, but for all students of American political and intellectual life."
— Russell Jacoby, UCLA

256 pp., 29 illus. $27.50
visit the book's website at:
http://www-mitpress.mit.edu/chomsky/

Now in Paperback

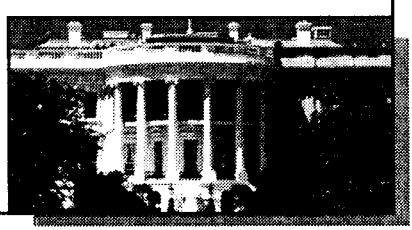
WHITE HOUSE TO YOUR HOUSE

Media and Politics in Virtual America

Edwin Diamond and Robert A. Silverman

"A revealing analysis of how the practice of politics and government has changed in this era of instant and constant television news, radio talk shows and alternative communications... Whether criticizing or praising the media, their darts are well aimed and worth considering."
— Hal Bruno,
Political Director,
ABC News

192 pp. $12.50 paper



The MIT Press

To order call **800-356-0343** (US & Canada) or (617) 625-8569.
http://www-mitpress.mit.edu

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

M.A. M.F.A. Ph.D.

Faculty

KATHLEEN CAMBOR – *Director*
EDWARD HIRSCH
CYNTHIA MACDONALD
ROBERT PHILLIPS
DANIEL STERN
ADAM ZAGAJEWSKI
EDWARD ALBEE – *School of Theatre*

Visiting Faculty 97-98

MARY GAITSKILL
PHILIP LEVINE

Visiting Writers 97-98

ALICE ADAMS
ERNEST J. GAINES
THOM GUNN
DENIS JOHNSON
LESLIE ADRIENNE MILLER
C.K. WILLIAMS

Residencies 97-98

JOHN M. COETZEE
MARK DOTY
MAXINE KUMIN
CHRISTOPHER TILGHMAN

Creative Writing Program

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH
UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON
HOUSTON, TX 77204-3012
(713) 743-3015
(713) 743-3013

FAITH VENVERLOH – *Administrative Director*
(713) 743-3014

Application deadline for Fall 1998 semester: January 15, 1998

Creative Writing Program

Teaching Assistanship and Fellowships available. The University of Houston is an Affirmative Action/Equal Opportunity institution.

STEPS OF THE SUN

EVA THADDEUS

This winner of the Ariadne Prize for best first novel illuminates how the loves and conflicts of separate lives in a university town become deeply connected, and how the course of each life is driven where no one anticipates.

In the words of Mary Gordon: "This is a novel of unusual scope and breadth of ambition... It has a moral center and a political intelligence, warmed and deepened by sensuality."

Eva Thaddeus attended Stuyvestant High School, Lesley College, and Harvard. She uses her own experience in teaching and with homeless shelters and cooperative living arrangements to develop the background for this remarkable first novel. Hardcover, 244 pages, $21.95 + $2.00 s&h

Ariadne Press
4817 Tallahassee Ave.
Rockville, MD 20853
(301) 949-2514

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The founders of 96 Inc are making the arts what they were in the beginning, intelligent playfulness for its own sake."

– Kurt Vonnegut

"An important magazine."

– Judy Bass, ***Boston Herald***

"I particularly like the clean uncluttered look of your magazine. Clearly 96 Inc is serving a very useful purpose."

– Markland Taylor, ***Variety***

Subscriptions are $13.00 per year. You will receive copies of the magazine and invitations to 96 Inc's readings and events.

96 INC

P.O. Box 15559
Boston, MA 02215
(617) 267-0543

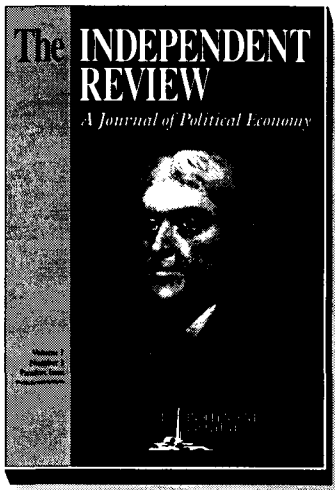
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"Excellent, diverse and wide-ranging."

— IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ, Rutgers University

Transcending the all-too-common politicization and superficiality of public policy research and debate, ***The INDEPENDENT REVIEW*** is the interdisciplinary, quarterly journal devoted to political economy and the critical analysis of government policy. Edited by **Robert Higgs**, ***The INDEPENDENT REVIEW*** is superbly written, provocative, and based on solid scholarship.

Ranging across economics, political science, law, history, philosophy, sociology, and related fields, ***The INDEPENDENT REVIEW*** boldly challenges the politicization and bureaucratization of our world, featuring in-depth examinations of current policy questions by many of the world's outstanding scholars and policy experts. Undaunted and uncompromising, this is *the* journal that will pioneer future debate!



*"**The Independent Review** is of great interest."*
— C. VANN WOODWARD, Pulitzer Prize-Winner, Yale U.

*"**The Independent Review** is an exciting new journal."*
— JOHN DIGGINS, Prof. of History, City U. of New York

". . . does not accept the pronouncements of government officials at face value, nor the conventional wisdom over serious public problems."
— JOHN MACARTHUR, Publisher, *Harper's Magazine*

*"**The Independent Review** avoids faddish pyrotechnics while seeking objectivity and high standards."*
— TIMUR KURAN, Prof. of Econ., U. of Southern California

"Excellent and profoundly important."
— TOM PETERS, Co-Author, *In Search of Excellence*

In Recent Issues:

The Ambitious, Accomodative Adam Smith
— SALIM RASHID

Preventing Banking Crises in the Future
— GEORGE G. KAUFMAN

What is Living and What is Dead in Classical Liberalism?
— CHARLES K. ROWLEY

The End of Welfare and the Contradiction of Compassion
— STEPHEN T. ZILIAK

The International Monetary System in Retrospect
— LELAND B. YEAGER

The Origins of the War on Drugs, 1984-1989
— BRUCE L. BENSON AND DAVID W. RASMUSSEN

Culture, Politics, and McCarthyism
— IRVING LOUIS HOROWITZ

Market-Based Environmentalism and the Free Market
— ROY E. CORDATO AND PETER J. HILL

Why the Great Depression Lasted So Long and Why It Ended
— ROBERT HIGGS

The Case Against Psychiatric Coercion
— THOMAS S. SZASZ

- Feature Articles
- Book Reviews
- Special Features
- Figures and Tables
- 160 Pages per Issue
- March, June, Sept. & Dec.
- Annual Index
- Plus more . . .

Individual Subscriptions:
$27.95/1 year, $52.95/2 year
Institutional Subscriptions:
$49.95/1 year, $94.95/2 year
International orders:
Add $28/subscription shipping

Order Toll-Free (U.S.)

800-927-8733

Phone: 510-632-1366
Fax: 510-568-6040
review@independent.org
http://www.independent.org

The INDEPENDENT INSTITUTE

Dept. 5Q, 134 Ninety-Eighth Ave.
Oakland, CA 94603 U.S.A.

Look for *The INDEPENDENT REVIEW* on better newsstands and in bookstores!

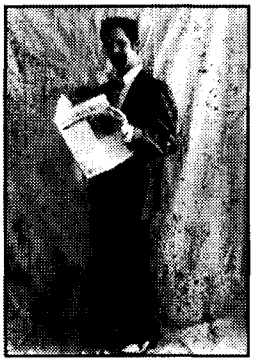
LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

BOSTON BOOK REVIEW

http: www.BostonBookReview.com

The Best of Both Worlds

The Apollonian



The Bostonian

The Dionysian

The thinking person's literary arts magazine

- Fiction, poetry, interviews, essays and book reviews
- 10 issues presenting the highest achievements in contemporary writing for only $24
- Sold in over 1100 stores throughout the U.S. and Canada

Subscribe to our free bimonthly email newsletter. Send an email with **subscribe** in the subject line to:

Gazette@soapbox.BostonBookReview.com

Subscribe to the BBR. Discover the well-written.

SUBSCRIPTIONS: 1 yr. (10 issues) $24.00
Canada and International add $16.00

PT

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Credit Card Payments: No. _____

(or call 617 497-0344) Exp. date:___ Signature: _____

☐ AMEX ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ DISCOVER

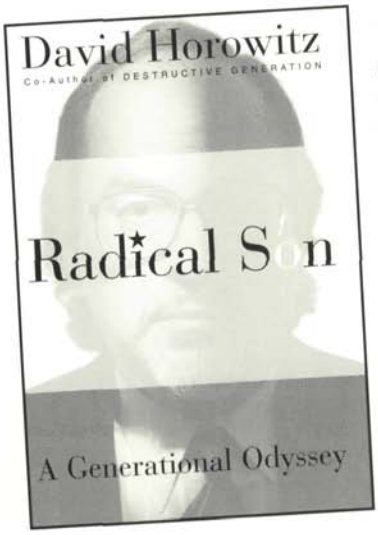
Or send check to:

THE BOSTON BOOK REVIEW, 30 Brattle Street, 4th floor, Cambridge, MA 02138

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

"The First Great American Autobiography of This Generation."

—GEORGE GILDER, AUTHOR OF *WEALTH AND POVERTY*



"*Radical Son* is one of the best political memoirs I've ever read.

Though it is really a love story—one man becomes passionately enamored of freedom, responsibility, and reason. Or maybe it's a book about faith healing, a true account of how belief in human dignity and individual rights cures blindness, folly, and hatred. Anyway, everyone who was ever involved with or influenced by the New Left should read David Horowitz's words, and then eat their own. I think the last political book that affected me this strongly was Hayek's *Road to Serfdom*."

—P. J. O'ROURKE

"David Horowitz has written a vivid and compelling memoir

in which it's the life as it was really lived that matters, not just the politics. *Radical Son* may be 'a generational odyssey,' but it's also a work of literature."

—JAMES ATLAS

"A document of the first importance for understanding the legacy of '60s radicalism."

—*BOOKLIST*

* * * * * * * * * *

DAVID HOROWITZ is the bestselling co-author of *The Rockefellers* and *The Kennedys*, president of the Center for the Study of Popular Culture, and co-editor of *Heterodoxy*.

Published by The Free Press, *Radical Son* is available at local bookstores everywhere; or call 800-752-6562 to order copies.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED

What are *you* doing for National Poetry Month?

April 1997

National Poetry Month is coordinated by the Academy of American Poets and sponsored this year by the following organizations:

Harry N. Abrams, Inc. • Algonquin Books of Chapel Hill • Alice James Books • American Booksellers Association • The American Library Association • *The American Poetry Review* • The Association of American University Presses • Bantam Doubleday Dell • Beacon Press • BOA Editions, Ltd. • Boyds Mills Press / Wordsong • Bread Loaf Writers' Conference / Bakeless Publication Prizes • Calyx Books • Centrum / The Port Townsend Writers' Conference • Chadwyck-Healey Inc. • City Lights Books • Coffee House Press • Columbia University Press • Consortium Book Sales and Distribution • Copper Canyon Press • Curbstone Press • The Ecco Press • Farrar, Straus & Giroux • Four Way Books • Gibbs Smith, Publisher • Graywolf Press • Grove / Atlantic, Inc. • The Hammer Reading Series in Los Angeles • Harcourt Brace • HarperCollins • Harvard University Press • Henry Holt Co. • Houghton Mifflin Co. • Hudson Valley Writers' Center, Inc. • Ingram Book Co. • International Poetry Forum • The Island Institute • Kaya Production • Alfred A. Knopf • Library of America • Louisiana State University Press • Magnetic Poetry, Inc. • Miami University Press • Mid-List Press • Modern Language Association • The National Association of College Stores • The National Book Foundation • National Council of Teachers of English • National Poetry Foundation • New Directions • New Issues Press Poetry Series • New Rivers Press • Northwestern University Press • W.W. Norton & Co. • Ohio State University Press • Oxford University Press • Papier-Mache Press • *Poetry*—The Modern Poetry Association • *Poetry Flash* • Poetry Society of America • Poets & Writers, Inc. • *Publishers Weekly / Library Journal* • Quarterly Review of Literature Poetry Book Series • Penguin • Princeton University Press • Routledge • Sarabande Books • Scribner • Small Press Distribution • Sun & Moon Press • Teachers & Writers Collaborative • Thomas Jefferson University Press • University of California Press • University of Chicago Press • University of Georgia Press • University of Illinois Press • University of Iowa Press • University of Massachusetts Press • University of Pittsburgh Press • University of South Carolina Press • University of Wisconsin Press • Urban Libraries Council • Utah State University Press • Wesleyan University Press • White Pine Press • Yale University Press • YMCA National Writer's Voice • Zoland Books

National Poetry Month Benefactors: Book Stacks Unlimited, Inc., Borders Books & Music, The Lila Wallace-Reader's Digest Fund

http://www.poets.org

Photo from *Kinsey, Photographer*, by Dave Bohn and Rodolfo Petschek, Black Dog & Leventhal Publishers.

Partisan Review
Published at Boston University
Printed in the U. S. A.

LICENSED TO UNZ.ORG
ELECTRONIC REPRODUCTION PROHIBITED